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“TURN THE WORLD’S HISTORY; WHAT FIND WE THERE
“BUT FORTUNE’S SPORTS, OR NATURE’S CRUEL CLAIMS,
“OR WOMAN’S ARTIFICE, OR MAN’S REVENGE.”

YOUNG.

A D E L A I D E ;

A

S T O R Y O F M O D E R N L I F E .

I N T H R E E V O L U M E S .

V O L . I I I .

L O N D O N :

LONGMAN, REES, ORME, BROWN, GREEN & LONGMAN

P A T E R N O S T E R - R O W ;

RICHARD NICHOLS, WAKEFIELD.

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RICHARD NICHOLS, TYPOGRAPHER, WAKEFIELD.

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A D E L A I D E .

CHAP. XXVII.

Don John, "It is so; the Count Claudio shall marry the
" Daughter of Leonato.

Borachio, "Yea, my Lord; but I can cross it.

Don John, "How canst thou cross this marriage?

Borachio, "Not honestly, my Lord; but so covertly that
" No dishonesty shall appear in me."

SHAKSPEARE.

"In vain a Rival barred his claim,
" Whose faith with Clare's was plight
" For he attaints that Rival's fame
" With treason's charge ——"

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

THOMAS WOODGATE was the only Child of a respectable Farmer, who having begun the world with little or nothing, had realized a comfortable fortune by honest industry. The Son was naturally an ill disposed Boy, and while the mistaken indulgence of his Parents prevented their correcting his faults, it also induced them to encourage him in extravagance and folly very unsuitable to his station and circum-

stances. It was their ambition “to make a Gentleman of him,” they determined to spare no expence in his education, and they sent him to the best school in that part of the Country ; but he was far from turning this advantage to good account. His Master’s reports of him were always unsatisfactory, and he came home confirmed in conceit and self-importance. He scorned the drudgery of applying to any trade ; and although his thoughtless expenditure threatened very soon to exhaust the finances of the Family, he preferred leading a life of discreditable idleness to endeavouring to assist his Father in his labours, and trying to improve his condition, and to render himself as respectable as He had done.

The old Man discovered, when it was too late, the mistake he had made in wishing to raise his Son above the situation to which he was born.

His Wife, fortunately for herself, died about that time ; and he had the misery and mortification of seeing Thomas grow every day more and more disreputable ; and of perceiving that of all his hard-earned savings, there would barely be enough left to support

him in his declining age. His remonstrances only exasperated his unnatural Son. He became weary of hearing them, and as the prospect of poverty began to stare him in the face, he turned his thoughts to seeking his fortune in some distant Country.

He had been spending what he called a ‘merry day,’ with several of his profligate Companions, and was returning home in a very social mood, when he fell in with a recruiting Sergeant of the Guards.

The Man persuaded him to accompany him to a Public House; he had always had a fancy for a Military life, and had even at one period entertained an idea of entering the army as an Officer. That view had long vanished from his imagination, but he still considered that there could be no disgrace to him in being a Soldier,—that he should look to great advantage in a Uniform;—The temptation held out to him was powerful,—his reason was confused,—he listened eagerly to the promises and representations of his new Friend,—and the next morning he informed his Father that he had been regularly enlisted in the Guards.

This intelligence completed the measure of the poor Farmer's misfortunes. The thought of Thomas's becoming a private Soldier,—in time of war too,—was such a termination of all the sanguine hopes he had once formed for him,—as he had never anticipated. He earnestly besought him to give up this wild plan, and allow him to purchase his discharge ; but his Son turned a deaf ear to all his arguments and entreaties. He was impatient to enter upon his new Career, and likewise to escape from the taunts and the ridicule expressed by his Friends at the step he had taken. He therefore joined his Regiment as speedily as possible, and was very soon afterwards sent with it to the Peninsular.

The history of his proceedings while he was abroad, has been already detailed in his own Narrative.

When he returned to England his Father was still alive, and with his support, and the help of the money he had himself become possessed of, he might have been enabled to establish himself creditably at home. But the unsettled habits he had acquired, rendered him more averse than ever to undertake any

permanent employment. He dazzled his original Associates by his increased extravagance, and astonished them by boasting of the resources he could command ; the period of his triumph was however of short duration. His money was spent, his resources had failed ; and the death of his Father, and the sale of his remaining property, which immediately followed that event ; destroyed the last hope of pecuniary relief which he had to depend upon.

The Village in which Woodgate had been born and brought up, was not above thirty miles from Fauconberg Manor, and just when he was beginning to experience pretty keenly the pangs of want,—he heard that his old acquaintance Colonel Henry Algeron was going to be married to a very rich Heiress. He knew well enough the sort of estimation in which the Colonel held his character, but distress had rendered him desperate ; and he determined to resort to the humiliating expedient of applying to his former Enemy for assistance in his difficulties.

He was aware that Henry's disposition was naturally generous, and he thought that in the height of

his own happiness and prosperity, he would not find in his heart to refuse to bestow a small portion of his wealth even upon so worthless an Object as himself, if he could persuade him that he really stood in urgent need of it.

As Woodgate had many reasons for disliking to present himself at the House at Fauconberg, and publicly requesting to see Colonel Algernon; he took up his quarters at a Village in the Neighbourhood, and determined to watch for an opportunity of meeting him, and speaking to him in private.

He found much greater difficulty in accomplishing this purpose than he had anticipated, for Henry very seldom either rode or walked out alone. He had tracked him and Adelaide very closely, during their sketching excursion, upon that memorable morning when Sir George and Lady Fauconberg had gone to announce their Marriage at Greyfield; and having at length become convinced that his chance of obtaining the desired interview *that* day, was quite hopeless, he was slowly returning to his lodging—vexed and mortified with his disappointment,—when a Horseman passed him at full gallop.

It is needless to say that this was Mr. Shirley, who had just been driven almost to madness by his unexpected meeting with Adelaide and her Lover. He continued to urge forward his Steed at a furious pace, without considering the inequalities of the ground he had to pass over ; and in descending a little stony Hill, the Animal lost its footing, fell upon its head, and precipitated its Rider against a Gate.

Woodgate had recognised Mr. Shirley, whom he had seen at the Election at Oldthorpe ; he had likewise heard something about his admiration for Miss Fauconberg, and as he had no doubt he must have met her and Colonel Algernon, he conjectured that such an interview might have been the cause of his extraordinary speed, and of the wildness which was so visible in his whole appearance. He was still so near him when his Horse fell, that he distinctly witnessed the accident, and he ran immediately to his assistance.

Mr. Shirley was completely stunned by the violence with which he had been thrown to the ground, and as Woodgate endeavoured to ascertain the extent

of the injury he had received, it occurred to him that if it did not prove to be very serious, he might contrive to turn it to his own account. His hatred for Colonel Algernon had been revived by the fruitless trouble he had given himself in following him; the success that might attend an appeal to *him* was uncertain;—and it now flashed across his mind that he might take a much readier and more profitable course by proposing to sell the fatal secret he was possessed of, to Mr. Shirley, than by condescending to demand the charity of his Rival; and he had picked up sufficient knowledge of the general character of the Member for Oldthorpe, to suspect that he would not decline entering into such a Negotiation.—All this was the consideration of a moment. When the dismounted Cavalier first came to himself, he did not seem to understand where he was, or what had happened to him. Woodgate, who was still bending over him, and watching him attentively, expressed a ‘hope that he did not feel much hurt.’

“I believe I have sprained my arm,” said Mr. Shirley, attempting to raise it:—Then looking with

some curiosity at the person who had addressed him, he added,

“I thank you much for the kind assistance you have afforded me.” And in a lower voice he muttered,—

“But I should have been far more obliged to you if you had allowed me to break my neck.”

He turned to look at his Horse, which was fastened by the bridle to the Gate, and which did not appear much the better for its fall than himself.

“Mr. Shirley,” observed his Companion, “I wish to have a little conversation with you before we part.”

William was surprised at finding himself so well known to the Stranger.

“I am not aware,” he replied, “Who it is that I am speaking to, but at this instant it would ill become me to refuse any request you may be inclined to make. I trust what you have to say to me will not occupy much time, for I have been so long absent from Greyfield, that I am extremely impatient to arrive there.”

“The business I am about to mention, concerns yourself,” answered Woodgate, assuming that pecu-

liar expression of intelligence which never failed to rivet the attention of those to whom he wished to make any interesting communication. “It is in my power to render you a Service,—but I must be handsomely rewarded for it.”

“You have already aided me,” observed Mr. Shirley, “in a manner which I am very ready to recompense with a more solid acknowledgement than empty thanks. But you must really tell me explicitly what it is you desire of me, for I cannot understand your insinuations; and I am perfectly unable to imagine any future service you may have the ability or the inclination to perform for me.”

Woodgate’s pride had been humbled, but not extinguished, and he was much piqued by the haughtiness of Mr. Shirley’s behaviour towards him.

“You shall hear my offer without delay,” said he in a tone of careless insolence. “And when you have done so, it will rest entirely within your own option to accept or to refuse to profit by it.—Promise to give me a suitable sum of money, and I will furnish you in return with a piece of information which

will enable you to break off Miss Fauconberg's intended Marriage with Colonel Henry Algernon."

William started violently, and astonishment deprived him for a moment of the power of utterance.

"If I thought," exclaimed he at length, "You could indeed make good your words, I would most willingly bestow upon you the half of my Father's Estate.—Of course you would not dare to propose to me to act in any way that I should consider in the slightest degree unhandsome or dishonourable."

"When I have stated to you my scheme," replied Woodgate, coolly, "You will be able to judge if it is consistent with your principles to adopt it.—I knew both the Colonel Algernons in Spain, and I happened to witness a deed of darkness committed there by Colonel Horace, with which no living Creature except Colonel Henry and myself ever became acquainted. From my intimate knowledge of all the circumstances connected with this History, I have little doubt that I could easily contrive to pervert it in such a manner as to transfer the guilt of one Cousin to the account of the other; and by so doing ruin

Colonel Henry in Sir George Fauconberg's opinion for life."

"Detestable Villain!" cried Mr. Shirley, drawing back with horror and indignation. "Do you imagine me base enough to be capable of such treachery?—Of becoming the Abettor of your wicked falsehoods?"

"I cannot be aware what any body is capable of, until I have put them to the test," answered the undaunted Woodgate. "But since I find you are so much shocked at my proposal, I will never offend you by mentioning it again; I am extremely sorry I was ever tempted to do so."

Then as he was walking away, he added in a sort of Soliloquy,

"Colonel Algernon's good fortune was always predominant. Perhaps he deserves his happiness;—at any rate, *I* shall not now be the means of disturbing it."

"Stop," exclaimed Mr. Shirley, in an agony of jealousy and indecision, "I have expressed myself more strongly than I intended.—I cannot consent to accuse Colonel Algernon directly of any thing I know

to be untrue,—but some middle course may perhaps be devised; I must have time to consider.—My arm too begins to be stiff and painful. Can you come to me at Greyfield to-morrow morning? I shall be much better able to talk this matter over with you then, than I am at present.”

Woodgate smiled. He had begun to fear that his expected prey would escape him, but the moment he perceived Mr. Shirley's resolution waver, he foresaw that he would at last greedily swallow the bait he had prepared for him.

He assisted him to mount his horse, and readily promised to meet him at any place and hour he might think proper to appoint: but he suggested the propriety of the Conference being held any where rather than in Sir William's House, since his appearance there might attract attention and curiosity.

It is unnecessary to detail the progress of that infamous Negotiation, whose effects have been already described. Mr. Shirley completely succeeded in blighting the fair fame of his Rival, and even in banishing him from his Native Country; but he had

still the mortification of discovering that he was himself as far as ever from being able to make the slightest impression upon Adelaide's heart. His self respect was so irretrievably destroyed, that he was lost to all sense of shame; and he did not consider that any future action, however base, could degrade his character to a lower level than it had sunk already. He had gone too far in duplicity to have the power of stopping where he was, and he determined to call another Stratagem to his aid, and to try what result might be produced by inventing and circulating a Report of Colonel Henry Algernon's death.

He composed a Paragraph, announcing the supposed event, which he took care to have properly inserted in the Newspaper; and he also contrived that the Paper, which a few days afterwards contained a contradiction of that false statement, put in by authority from Lord Altamont,—should never arrive at Fauconberg. As the Family there made no enquiries respecting the particulars of the decease of a person whose very name it was painful to them to mention, it was natural enough that they did not discover the

error into which they had fallen ;—and thus a second time did the treacherous falsehood imposed upon them by their unprincipled Neighbour, appear likely to answer entirely to his satisfaction.

By his disgraceful compact with Woodgate, Mr. Shirley found that he had brought upon himself a most importunate Tormentor. His demands became both constant and unreasonable, and as it was impossible ever to content him, he often uttered very insolent and disagreeable threats. William was not much afraid of his publishing their mutual secret to the world ; but as he was aware of his vindictive character, he could not feel quite sure that he might not, if he was exasperated, make some fatal disclosure to Sir George Fauconberg. He was therefore obliged to stoop to conciliatory measures, which were peculiarly galling to his haughty and overbearing Spirit.

Woodgate's imprisonment afforded him a temporary relief from his persecutions, and he was not a little vexed when he heard that he had at last been liberated.

He was in no humour to receive his Petitioner very

graciously, when he presented himself before him on the day previous to that which had been fixed for his Marriage. His appearance was much calculated to excite compassion, and Mr. Shirley was preparing to bestow upon him a small sum of money, which he declared ‘was all that he had it then in his power to do for him :’—When Woodgate, grown desperate by suffering and want, upbraided him so keenly for his meanness, and used such insufferably insolent language towards him,—that William lost his temper. He not only refused to give him one single penny, but he desired his Father’s Servant to turn him away from the house whenever he dared to show his face at Greyfield. And Woodgate accordingly departed, loudly breathing that vengeance which he did not fail to execute.

As soon as he was gone, Mr. Shirley began to repent his own imprudence in having driven so dangerous a Man to despair, and to apprehend what might be the consequence of having thus pushed matters to extremity between himself and his desperate Accomplice.

It was too late to call him back, as he would willingly have done,—he flattered himself that there was not time for him to prejudice him in Adelaide's favour before their Union had taken place; and in short he had so many occupations and arrangements to attend to, that he soon forgot his unpleasant Visitor.—It was not until he saw Sir George Fauconberg coming to meet him on his way to Church the following morning, that any serious apprehension of his having been betrayed by Woodgate, occurred to his imagination.

After his conference with the Baronet at his own House, Mr. Shirley spared no pains to ascertain what had become of his former partner in guilt, with the hope of being able to learn from him, exactly how much he had told Sir George; but all his endeavours to trace where he had gone proved fruitless, and he was at last obliged to content himself with the idea of his having entirely fled the country.

To return to Adelaide,—it is merely necessary to observe that she continued for more than ten days in a most alarming state, and even after she had been

pronounced out of danger, she was so extremely weak and languid, that her Father and Mother were very far from feeling comfortable about her. Her nerves were sadly shattered, and in short her constitution had received a shock, the effects of which it was evident that it would not very speedily recover.—Dr. Seebright recommended that she should have change of air as soon as she was well enough to be moved, and Sir George and Lady Fauconberg accordingly determined to take her to the sea side.

Mr. Shirley rode over every day to enquire after Adelaide, but he never ventured to ask to see either her Father or her Mother; he was therefore considerably startled one morning by being told that Sir George had desired he might be requested to come in.

“ I can now have the happiness of informing You,” said the Baronet as he entered the room, “ that my Daughter’s recovery appears to be no longer doubtful. I propose to have the pleasure of communicating this agreeable news in person to Sir William to-morrow, when I hope I may also find *You* at

home, as I intend to take the same opportunity of repeating to your Father the substance of the last conversation I had with yourself, and I wish to do so in your presence.—Have you made known to your Family the altered position in which we are placed with regard to each other?”

Mr. Shirley confessed that he had not mentioned the subject to them,—that he could not help cherishing a hope that his doom might not yet prove quite irreversible.

“I am sorry,” replied Sir George, “to find that I did not express myself so distinctly as I believed I had done, when I spoke to you before. I must now beg you will clearly understand that although it is my desire we should always continue to consider ourselves *Friends*,” the last word seemed almost to stick in his throat,—“it is impossible we can ever become more nearly connected.—There is one thing,” continued he after a pause, “which distresses me extremely. Indifferent people never fail to make it their business to talk about their Neighbour’s concerns, and I fear that those who are unacquainted

with the circumstances of the case, will be inclined to condemn Adelaide unjustly, and to look upon her as a heartless Jilt.—Lady Fauconberg and myself are very willing to take our full share of the blame, (which indeed we deserve;) by declaring that it was entirely owing to our persuasion, that our Daughter consented to accept Your proposal; and that it is also at our desire, that she has since declined to fulfil an engagement which we have recently discovered would be incompatible with her happiness.—You are well aware that this statement is the *real* truth, though not the *whole* truth. And should you happen to hear Adelaide's conduct undeservedly censured, I trust you will upon all occasions have the candour to stand forward and speak in her justification.”

Mr. Shirley found the greatest difficulty in commanding himself, and in restraining the rage and indignation which for a moment agitated his whole frame.

He felt the danger of provoking Sir George to make an exposure which he seemed determined if possible to avoid; and he was likewise afraid of be-

traying more than had already come to the Baronet's knowledge. He therefore suppressed the bitter exclamation that had nearly passed his lips,—and observed in as calm a tone as he could assume, “that after the manner in which he had been treated, *that* was indeed expecting of him the extreme of generosity.”

“I will not disappoint you,” he continued, “for my attachment to Miss Fauconberg has been so sincere, that I shall take every opportunity of proving my consideration for *her* feelings, however regardless I may invariably have found her of *mine*.”

Sir George did not trust himself to make any reply ; and as neither of the Gentlemen were much inclined to prolong their conversation, Mr. Shirley soon took his departure.

As he rode home and began to take a more dispassionate view of what had passed, he perceived it would be desirable that he should prepare his Father and his Sisters for the unwelcome intelligence they were shortly to receive ; and that it would be a great advantage to him to be the first person to tell them his own story according to his own Version.

Sir William remarked the extraordinary depression of his Son's spirits, and when he kindly enquired ' what made him look so melancholy, now that Adelaide was out of danger ?' He broke to him the fatal Secret which had, he said, been for some days preying heavily upon his mind.

Sir William's astonishment was only equalled by his anger, and he declared ' that he would not tamely submit to see any Member of his Family treated so shamefully.' William endeavoured to appease his Father, while he expressed the deepest gratitude for the warmth and kindness with which he resented his disappointment.

He observed, ' that he did certainly think he had a right to consider himself extremely ill used ; but perhaps he had made a fortunate escape in not marrying a Woman who could never have returned his affection. That her entire disregard for his feelings, mortifying as it had been to him at first, was beginning to have a salutary effect, and had already done much towards curing him of his unfortunate and ill-placed attachment.' He said ' he felt in perfect

charity with Adelaide ; but of course he should not wish to see her again for some time to come, in short not until he was able to meet her with indifference. That he hoped no coolness would ensue between her Family and his, in consequence of what had just occurred ;—that quarrels between Neighbours were always foolish and unpleasant, and that it was his earnest desire that the inhabitants of Fauconberg Manor and Greyfield, should remain as good Friends as if no intermarriage had ever been in contemplation between them.’

Sir William was much surprised at the extraordinary patience with which his Son supported his mortification, and at the forbearance he expressed towards those from whom he had received it ; and in talking the subject confidentially over with Emily, he told her ‘ there was something in the Story that he could not quite understand,—and that he was much inclined to suspect that William had concealed from him circumstances,—perhaps of no great importance, but the ignorance of which might render it incomprehensible.’

Julia looked very wise when she heard of the termination of her Brother's Matrimonial prospects; and when he was not present, she from time to time extolled his *wonderful* heroism and fortitude.

The interview between the two Baronets went off rather stiffly, particularly at its commencement, but there was a frankness and cordiality in the manner of the one that could scarcely fail to conciliate the other. Sir William observed, however, that his Neighbour did not greet his Son so warmly as he had greeted himself, and that William, far from resenting this apparent coolness, behaved towards him in return with even more than usual deference and attention.

After every thing had been explained, Sir George endeavoured to divert the conversation into a more agreeable and less embarrassing course, by enquiring after the Miss Shirleys. He said Lady Fauconberg had desired him to mention that she intended to have the pleasure of calling upon them as soon as she could comfortably leave her Daughter. And he added that Adelaide had begged him to offer them her best love, and had ventured to hope that they would come over

and see her when she was sufficiently recovered to be allowed to receive Visitors.

The Gentlemen parted upon amicable terms, and each of them felt much relieved when the conference was concluded.

The Ladies of the two Families met more than once before Sir George and Lady Fauconberg went to the Sea, and any sentiment of anger that Julia might have entertained towards Adelaide, vanished entirely the instant she beheld the sad alteration that a few weeks of severe illness had made in her appearance.

Ever since the distress of mind she had suffered when Henry Algernon left Fauconberg, she had lost her former air of health and gaiety, and even after she recovered her spirits, she had continued to look extremely delicate.

But now her cheek was so completely colourless, she had grown so thin, and her Form altogether seemed so excessively fragile,—that it was impossible to gaze upon her without experiencing a painful apprehension that she was not likely to remain very long an Inhabitant of this World.

The engaging gentleness of her manner, and the almost angelic expression of her smile, rendered her evident delicacy still more affecting :—and even after Emily had seen her Friend a second time, and had been assured that her own anxiety about her, had exaggerated all remaining cause of uneasiness, she could scarcely allow herself to believe that any thing short of a miracle, could ever restore her beloved Adelaide to health and strength.

CHAP. XXVIII.

“ ——— a highborn and a welcomed Guest
“ To Otho's Hall came Lara with the rest.
“ The long carousal shakes the illumin'd hall,
“ Well speeds alike the banquet and the Ball ;
“ And the gay dance of bounding Beauty's train
“ Links grace and harmony in happiest chain :
“ Blest are the early hearts and gentle hands
“ That mingle there in well according bands ;
“ It is a sight the careful brow might smooth,
“ And make age smile, and dream itself to youth,
“ And Youth forget such hour was past on earth—
“ So springs the exulting bosom to that mirth !”

L O R D B Y R O N .

THE account that William Vernon had given of his Mother's health when he came to Greyfield, had occasioned his Uncle much uneasiness. She had never been a strong person, and latterly symptoms of Consumption had manifested themselves,—which afterwards became so alarming, that Mr. Vernon determined to spend the following winter in Devonshire.

His whole Family had been collected around him ;

Arthur had contrived to pay him a long visit; even his Sailor Son had spent some time at home;—and when the Young Men were again about to be dispersed in different directions, they could not help feeling a melancholy foreboding that *all* the members of their happy Family Party might never be re-assembled.

As soon as Sir William Shirley heard of the judicious plan Mr. Vernon had formed of removing his Sister to a warmer climate, and ascertained from his Nephew, (who had just established himself in his Parsonage at Greyfield,) that Arthur was not likely to obtain a second leave of absence;—he proposed to his Daughters that they should all likewise make an excursion from home, and join their Relations in the West of England. He said ‘it would be a great pleasure to himself to be with poor Louisa, and that their society might also be beneficial to the others under their present circumstances.’

Emily was delighted with the idea of seeing her Aunt and her Cousins, and being able to take her share with the latter in their attendance upon their

Mother,—or in any way contributing to their comfort. And if Julia did not anticipate much satisfaction from the prospect of a reunion with persons so little suited to her taste ; the variety from the common course of things, which a Journey to a new place, promised to afford,—was extremely agreeable to her.

Mr. Shirley was ready enough to approve of any project of temporary absence from Greyfield, but “as he had no wish,” as he expressed himself,—“to add one to the large number of near Relations who were going to be congregated together ;” he declared his intention of establishing himself in his Father’s House in Town whenever the removal took place.

Mrs. Vernon was deeply gratified by her Brother’s affectionate kindness in leaving all his concerns at home, and taking so long a journey to see her. She found more immediate benefit than she had expected, from the change of air ;—her cough became much less troublesome, her hectic colour was exchanged for a more natural hue, and in short her present Abode seemed to agree with her so well, that it appeared to give every promise of promoting her ultimate recovery.

She had been greatly pleased by the joy Emily had expressed at their meeting, and she was much struck afterwards with the developement and cultivation of her mind, and the alteration that had been effected in her whole character. She was not aware of the attachment which had wrought this change ; and she was a good deal surprised one day when she was expatiating to her Brother upon the merit of his favorite Daughter, and assuring him in the warmth of her admiration, that Emily's attentions to herself had endeared her to her as much as if she was her own Child ;—by perceiving that Sir William looked much embarrassed, and turned the conversation very suddenly to another subject.

Mrs. Vernon began to observe that her Niece blushed whenever Arthur's name was mentioned. She recollected that when she had talked to her Son of his Cousins, after his visit to Fauconberg, he had always spoken of Emily in terms of the highest commendation ; but as this was a topic he constantly endeavoured to avoid entering upon,—she had fancied that although he could not help admiring his beautiful Relation, he might not perhaps altogether like her.

The real state of the case now burst upon her mind, and while it encreased her interest and affection for Emily, it grieved her to think that any obstacle should prevent the Union of two Persons so completely calculated to promote each other's happiness. She hoped that the peace of neither had been destroyed ; she suspected that they had not communicated their mutual affection to each other ; and though she felt the most ardent curiosity to know exactly how far their hearts might have been engaged, she was conscious of the impropriety of touching upon so delicate a point with her Brother, and the necessity of concealing her suspicions from the Parties themselves.

Sir William Shirley had made his arrangements to remain in Devonshire until it was time to go to Town ; and he had requested Mr. Vernon to find a House large enough to contain the two Families.

There were several People in the Neighbourhood of this Abode, with whom Sir William happened to be acquainted, and he consequently received more visits and invitations than he or his Companions were at first inclined to accept.

After Mrs. Vernon's health began materially to improve, however, they were very glad to join in the Society thus offered to them ; but upon these occasions, Emily always petitioned to be one of those Young Ladies who were to remain at home with the Invalid ; and when her Aunt remonstrated in the kindest manner against her constantly sacrificing her own amusement for her sake,—she only replied,

“ I trust you will not refuse me the greatest gratification I can enjoy. I can go out at any time in London or in the North, but it is not often that I can have the happiness of being with You.”

Julia contrived to amuse herself extremely well. She found her Relations much less disagreeable to her than she had formerly thought them when they were at Greyfield, and her behaviour to Mrs. Vernon was so respectful and even attentive, that her Aunt almost fancied she had originally judged her character too harshly.

The Habitation that Mr. Vernon had selected for his Brother-in-Law and himself, was not above twenty miles from Altamont Castle, and they heard it often

spoken of as one of the finest Places in that part of the Country.

Woodgate had been incorrect in stating to Adelaide that Colonel Henry Algernon was actually on his way to England; for Sir George Fauconberg found, upon enquiry, that his Regiment was not expected to be sent home until the following Spring,—and that he had not himself the slightest intention of returning before it.—In the mean while Colonel Horace Algernon had come over from Abroad under the pretence of paying a visit to his Grandfather, but for the real purpose of endeavouring to persuade him to assist him in his pecuniary difficulties.

He had had an unusual run of bad luck at play, and his gaming debts had consequently accumulated so disagreeably, that he was almost driven to desperation. He was aware his Mother had opened her purse to him so often already, that *She* had no longer the means left of doing so again; and although Lord Altamont received him rather coolly, and refused at first to listen to the representations he attempted to make to him of his embarrassments; he soon con-

trived to succeed in persuading him to look upon him more favourably. His presence revived all the old Peer's former affection for him ; he hoped that Horace might at length have grown weary of leading a disreputable and wandering life ; and he even told him that he was willing to pay all his debts, however inconvenient such a measure might be,—if he would promise to give up his bad habits and establish himself permanently at home.

There was much truth in the idea that Colonel Algernon was completely tired and disgusted with his career of profligacy and exile,—Yet his mind was so totally perverted and unsettled, that he had not the resolution to abandon the evil practices he despised, and to determine to pursue a better course in future. He eagerly grasped at Lord Altamont's generous offer ; but as he scorned to enter into an Engagement which he knew full well he should not keep, he compromised the matter, and by proposing to remain in England until Henry's return ;—prevailed upon his Grandfather to satisfy the most clamorous of his Creditors immediately,—under an understanding that the

rest of the demands upon him were to be settled afterwards, provided he finally made up his mind to fix his abode at Altamont Castle.

Thus he became relieved from the pressure of present distress; he was too improvident to care much for more remote inconvenience,—and if the recollection of the probable recurrence of pecuniary difficulties ever crossed his imagination, he silenced it at once by reflecting that the period could not be *very* remote when he must become possessed of all Lord Altamont's extensive landed property;—and even should the worthy Peer's life be extended beyond the ordinary course of nature, he could look out for some rich Heiress, and gain a large fortune by a more expeditious path.

Colonel Algernon's return afforded a subject of much conversation in the Neighbourhood of Altamont Castle.

Julia Shirley often felt an inclination to take his part, for no other reason than because she always heard him censured by every body else. She had a great curiosity to see him; and she thought it not

impossible that she might be able to discover from him the real History of his Cousin's Quarrel with Adelaide Fauconberg,—which of all others was the Secret she was the most desirous to learn.

None of her Companions had any wish to become acquainted with a Young Man whose character in the world was so notoriously unworthy and disreputable; and peculiar circumstances had also given Sir William a natural dislike to the idea of any Person bearing the name of Algernon.

One morning when Mr. Vernon returned from his ride, he told the Young Ladies that ‘he had brought them an invitation to a Ball; and that Mrs. Stanley, (at whose House it was to be given,) had so very kindly insisted upon seeing them *all*, that he had undertaken for Sir William that he would act as Chaperon to his Nieces as well as to his Daughters;—and that they must therefore prepare their Ball Dresses.’

Mrs. Vernon was much pleased with this arrangement, and entered with great kindness into the satisfaction it seemed to afford to those whom it

principally concerned. Louisa and Emily Vernon, who had yet been at very few amusements of this sort, were delighted at the prospect of a Dance, and only regretted that their Mother's health would not allow her to be of their party.

“I like the thoughts of this Ball well enough,” said Julia to her Cousins, when they were talking it over together; “besides the people we know already, and may consequently be glad to meet,—all the Quizzes in the Country will be brought out there for our amusement. We may perhaps have a chance too of seeing the great and terrible Lion, Colonel Algernon.”

“I have very little fancy for looking at Monsters of any description,” replied Louisa Shirley laughing, “but should the one you allude to, be led forth to be gazed upon in public, I conclude he has been so well trained for such an exhibition, that quiet inoffensive people like ourselves need have no cause to be afraid of encountering him.”

“Be afraid of meeting him! No,—” exclaimed Julia. “My only fear is that he may prove refrac-

tory, and chuse to shun the society of civilized Men and Women.—It cannot be pleasant to find Oneself in the company of those by whom one happens to suspect that one's character, justly or unjustly, is held in abhorrence.”

The expected Evening at length arrived, and Julia was not disappointed; for as Colonel Algernon had begun to tire of the dull uniformity of Altamont Castle, and was far from being sorry to find an opportunity of renewing his acquaintance with some of his Former Friends,—he was very willing to obey the summons he had received from Mrs. Stanley.

Since he was to come from so long a distance, he was among the number of those who were invited by the Hostess to stay in the House; and he heard much from the Party he found there, of the beauty of Miss Shirley.

It was also said, that unlike most other Young Ladies, she had an objection to going out, but that Mrs. Stanley thought she would be so great an ornament to her Ball, that she had absolutely declared she would upon this occasion take no refusal.

“She must be an odd Person,” observed Horace, “I always admire any body who is different from the rest of the world.”

“Miss Shirley is not half so extraordinary a character as her Sister,” replied one of his Companions, “but you will so soon see them both, that you will be able to judge of them for yourself.”

When Sir William Shirley’s name was announced, Colonel Algernon’s eye wandered towards the door, and he certainly did not think the Daughter who was leaning upon the Baronet’s arm, at all less lovely than he had expected. He remarked that Julia and the Miss Vernons were also very pretty Girls. He did not much notice either of them however, but in the course of the evening he requested Mrs. Stanley to present him to Emily. She happened at the moment to be engaged for the next dance, and as her Partner just then came up to claim her,—Horace lost his chance of entering into conversation with her. He felt vexed and angry, and he probably looked so; Julia who had been sitting beside her Sister during this little scene, had watched him attentively; and as

he accidentally caught her eye, there was an expression of arch intelligence in her countenance which seemed to imply that she had understood what was passing in his mind. He recollected having been told that she was eccentric; and seating himself in the place which Emily had just left, he said to her,

“ I have lived so long abroad Miss Shirley, that I am not sure if you may not consider that I am taking an unpardonable liberty in venturing to introduce myself to you. The forms of English Society are I believe still different from those of the Countries I have lately inhabited.”

“ Your conduct, Colonel Algernon,” replied Julia in a tone of mock severity, “ has certainly not been quite in conformity with our Island Customs; but the breach of decorum you have committed,” added she with a smile, “ is so trifling, that I should be a *very strict* Person indeed, if I refused to pardon it;—particularly after the very *humble* and *proper* apology you have made for your transgression.”

Horace’s fancy was much struck by the tone of Julia’s answer, he carried on the discourse in her own

strain, and in less than a quarter of an hour, they had mutually become as much at their ease as if they had been known to each other for years.

“I was at one time in the way of seeing a good deal of a Cousin of Yours,” remarked Julia to her new Acquaintance, “and I want to ask you what has become of him?”

“You mean my Namesake Henry Algernon I suppose,” said he. “He is in the West Indies, pining away with love for Miss Fauconberg, as I understand.—Since she will be a great Heiress, he has some reason to regret that she jilted him; but I really think it is not quite necessary for him to break his heart about it.”

“I never could understand,” observed Julia thoughtfully, why it was that that marriage was broken off?”

“No cause could be assigned, I imagine,” replied Colonel Algernon, “but the true one. The Lady had changed her mind!”

“But why did she do so?” enquired Julia.

“That is a question,” continued Horace, “You

can scarcely expect it possible *I* should be able to answer.—I conclude She considered it was a little privilege that all Young Ladies were entitled to exert.—Speaking seriously however, I assure you, (as you seem much interested in the subject,) that I am not at all acquainted with Henry's secrets. I probably know less about them than you do. It is a very long while since we have met; I suppose that I shall see him in the Spring, when he returns to England."

"I thank you much," said Julia, "for the candid confession you have just made. I perceive that you are perfectly ignorant of all that has happened to Adelaide Fauconberg since the period when she so suddenly discarded her first Admirer."

"Good God!" exclaimed Colonel Algernon, instantly recollecting himself, "what an Idiot I have been! I now remember having heard that she was afterwards engaged to your Brother, and that she behaved even more cavalierly to him than she had previously done to poor Henry."

"All this is very true," observed Julia, "but you

really need not look so dreadfully disconcerted. You have not said any thing the least indiscreet, and it could surely be no fault of *Yours* that Miss Fauconberg did not choose to prove more faithful to her Engagements.—I see my Father and Emily coming towards us, so I must go in search of my Cousins, who are such Novices in the ways of the world, that they might not know how to take care of themselves without my kind assistance.”

She looked very much as if she was inclined to have added, “and during my absence you may find the opportunity you seemed before so much to wish for, of improving your acquaintance with Emily.”

Horace had, however, been so agreeably amused by Julia's lively wit, her satirical remarks, and her quickness at repartee,—that he had almost forgotten her beautiful Sister ; and he would not allow her to depart in quest of the Miss Vernons, until he had made her promise that she would consider herself engaged to dance the next Quadrille with him.

The Ball was not concluded until a very late, or rather an *early* hour ; and during the drive home Sir

William Shirley asked Julia who had introduced her to Colonel Algernon ?

“ Mrs. Stanley introduced him to Emily, and he introduced himself to me,” replied Julia. “ He is a remarkably entertaining, agreeable person.”

“ I imagined you had found him so,” observed her Father, very drily, “ by your encouraging him to talk to you the greater part of the evening. I can have of course no objection to your dancing with Colonel Algernon, as with any body else you may meet in private society ; but I *very much* disapprove of your attracting general attention, by flirting in the sort of way you did to-night, particularly with a young Man of Colonel Algernon’s character.”

Julia was always indignant at being found fault with ; and she felt peculiarly mortified at receiving this reproof in the presence of her Cousins. She dared not say one word in her own defence, but she silently resolved that no admonition from Sir William, should deter her from flirting to any extent, as often as she might have an inclination to do so.—Her rebellious Spirit took fire at the idea of her being forbidden to

talk as much as she pleased for *one* evening to a Partner she found very amusing ;—because he happened to be considered a Libertine. She was more than half disposed to disbelieve all the Stories she had heard against him : and the very circumstance of her Father's having enjoined her to shun Colonel Algernon's Society, acted upon the usual perversity of her disposition, and induced her to wish to become better acquainted with him.

Mrs. Vernon was anxious to hear an account of the Ball, and much gratified to learn that it had proved so agreeable.

After Sir William and Mr. Vernon had gone out riding, she was still listening to the different descriptions of it, when the conversation was interrupted by the arrival of a party of Visitors. The Gentlemen who were staying at Mrs. Stanley's,—and of course Colonel Algernon among the number ; had come over to call upon the Baronet and his Brother-in-Law, and to enquire how the young Ladies were, after the fatigues of the preceding evening ?

They staid a long while. Horace's attentions were

pointedly and almost exclusively directed to Julia, who evidently received them with much satisfaction ; and her amiable young Relations were shocked at the pleasure she seemed to find in conversing with him in defiance of the kind and admonitory caution that had been so lately given to her by her Father.

Julia Shirley was the sort of Person exactly calculated to captivate Colonel Algernon. She was unlike any body he had ever met with before ; the originality of her ideas and the peculiarity of her mode of expressing them, amused him extremely ; and without taking the trouble of considering very narrowly the nature of his admiration for her, or the probable consequences to which it might lead ; he determined to see as much of her as possible.

He contrived to get himself invited to all the parties to which he knew she had been asked. He found constant pretences for delaying his return to Altamont Castle. And he even endeavoured, though the attempt proved ineffectual ; to conciliate Sir William Shirley and soften away the strong prepossession he seemed to entertain against him.

Julia's vanity was much flattered by the marked preference that Horace displayed towards her upon every occasion. She was willing to think him in return, the most agreeable Person in the world. She completely shut her eyes to all his faults.—And she who had scoffed at sentiment in others, and had always prided herself upon the invulnerable hardness of her own heart,—began almost to suspect that she was in some danger of falling in love.

Certain rumours of the supposed attraction that detained her Son, had reached Mrs. Algernon; and both she and Lord Altamont were so delighted with the hope of his being induced to make a respectable Marriage, and to settle himself permanently in England, that they took good care not to press him to return to them, but advised him on the contrary to remain where he was and amuse himself among his Friends as long as he felt inclined to do so.

Sir William Shirley began to feel seriously uneasy at Colonel Algernon's flirtation with his Daughter. Even supposing him to be really in earnest, which he was very much inclined to doubt, he could not allow

himself for a single instant to think of the possibility of consenting to receive him as his Son-in-Law.—He was much hurt at perceiving that his admonitions had had no effect upon Julia. She was indeed afraid in his presence, of smiling quite so graciously upon Horace's attentions as she had done at first, but he was well aware that she received them more kindly than ever as often as he happened to be out of the way.

While the Baronet was revolving in his mind the expediency of speaking to the Colonel himself upon the subject which thus distressed him, he received a Letter from William who had just heard the Report of his Sister's intended marriage, and who appeared to be excessively annoyed by it. He said, 'he hoped it was entirely unfounded; but he earnestly conjured his Father, if such a thing had really been in contemplation, to break it off immediately; and at all events to decline all future communication with Colonel Algernon.' He added 'that he had known him abroad, and had accidentally been informed of circumstances relating to his conduct and private character, which

he was not at liberty to reveal, but which justified him in declaring that he had the worst possible opinion of his principles.’

This communication decided Sir William to lose no time in seeking an interview with Horace. He rode out, without much hope, however, of finding him at home ; and had scarcely proceeded half a mile when he met the very Person he was in quest of. The Colonel greeted him with a smile, and told him he was then upon his way to call upon him.

“ I am particularly glad that I have not missed you,” replied Sir William, “ as I much wish to have some conversation with you.”

He then said ‘ that Colonel Algernon must have supposed that *He*, as a Father, could not fail to have observed his attentions to Julia ; and he trusted he would allow him to add that he had felt much gratified by the admiration he had shown for her. That to prevent future disappointment to either of the Parties, it was in these cases always desirable to come to an early understanding. And that after having weighed every circumstance maturely and deliberately

in his own mind, he had formed a determination,—which he found it peculiarly painful and awkward to announce to him;—of expressing a desire that an acquaintance so recently made, might be now brought to an amicable termination,—and of requesting that he would discontinue his Visits to his Family.’

Horace reddened, drew himself up, and listened to this announcement with evident surprise and indignation. He restrained, however, the rage that was boiling in his bosom, and it was in a bitter ironical sort of tone, that he answered,

“ You are undoubtedly the best judge of what society it may be most agreeable to you to select, and what matrimonial connections you may consider it most eligible for the Miss Shirleys to form. But I certainly did not expect to receive such injustice at your hands, as to be condemned by you before you had even heard what I had to say for myself,—or more properly speaking, to be rejected before I had ventured to propose. I am far from wishing to intrude my company where it is not desired; I shall scrupulously obey your injunction of not again pre-

senting myself at your door; but since I am forbidden to have the pleasure of seeing your Daughters again under your own roof, and I am to regard them as Strangers when I may happen to meet them elsewhere; will you have the goodness to inform me if my very unflattering dismissal proceeds entirely from yourself, or if my visits have become unwelcome to Miss Julia also?"

Sir George replied ' that he had not consulted his Daughter upon a point which however interesting it might be to her feelings, he was convinced that *He* was much better able to decide for her own happiness than she could be herself.'

" I am willing to admit that the odium of my present communication," concluded he, " rests upon my head alone. And I have only to beg that you will consider my decision as perfectly final."

" Unquestionably I shall do so," observed Horace, with a sneer. " Farewell Sir William, it may be some time before we meet again, but believe me I shall not easily forget the *gratitude* I owe you for the *courteous* treatment I have received from you:—and

be assured moreover that I will not *disappoint* the expectations which your *good opinion* of my character may have led you to form of me."

Without waiting for any rejoinder, he turned his Horse's head, and rode slowly homewards. Sir William followed him with his eye till he was out of sight. He was more than half inclined to call him to account for his insolence, but he recollected that he had spoken under the excitement of deep mortification, and he made allowance for the irritation of his feelings. He was extremely relieved to have got rid of the thorn which had so long tormented him, and he hastened back to relate to Mrs. Vernon, (who had been previously admitted into his confidence,) all the particulars of his conversation with Colonel Algeron, and also to write an account of it to his Son.

As soon as his Despatch was finished, he sent for Julia, and having shown her her Brother's Letter, he informed her of the step he had just taken in consequence of the warning contained in it. She first grew very red, then turned deadly pale, and at last burst into a violent passion of tears. Sir William

spoke very kindly to her, but she did not seem to listen to him. She was equally insensible to the friendly arguments of her Aunt, and the affectionate consolations of her Sisters and her Cousins ; and she locked herself up in her own room for the rest of the day, that she might brood over her indignation, and indulge her stubborn grief in solitude.

When her Father sent to her to know if she intended to come down to dinner, she was not ashamed to appear with swollen eyes ; and she seated herself in sullen silence, which she seemed obstinately bent upon maintaining in spite of the repeated endeavours made by Emily and the Miss Vernons to draw her into something like conversation.

As soon as the Servants had retired, Sir William, who had lost all patience at Julia's refractory behaviour, desired her ' to return to her own apartment, and to remain there until she had learnt to command her unruly temper, and to conduct herself with more becoming propriety towards her Uncle and Aunt, and with more dutiful respect towards himself.'

The young Lady obeyed him without speaking a word.

In the course of the evening Mrs. Vernon, who perceived that harsh measures would make no impression upon so obstinate a temper, but would be likely rather to aggravate the evil; determined to try what could be done by other means. She took an opportunity of following Julia to her room, and represented to her so strongly, the folly, and danger, as well as the wickedness of her present behaviour to her Father, that she at length persuaded her to consent to make him an apology.

Through her kind mediation Sir William was prevailed upon to grant his Daughter the forgiveness she very reluctantly submitted to ask for,—but the reconciliation thus effected, was not very cordial on either side.

The next day Mr. Vernon, Sir William Shirley, and two of the young Ladies were engaged to dine at Mrs. Stanley's, where it was known that Colonel Algernon had also been invited. It had been arranged that Julia was to have made one of this party, but under present circumstances, it was of course settled that Emily should take her place.

In the morning the two Families received a visit

from a young Man who was a near Neighbour and intimate Friend of Mrs. Stanley's.

“ I suppose I shall have the pleasure of meeting some of you at dinner to-day,” said he soon after his arrival. “ Are *You* to be one of Mrs. Stanley's Guests, Miss Julia ?”

“ No, I am going to stay at home,” replied she, in rather a sulky tone, and colouring slightly as she spoke. “ My Sister and Miss Vernon will be there.”

In a few minutes the Visitor observed,

“ By the way, I have just heard a piece of news which may perhaps be less surprising to you, than it was to me. Colonel Algernon is gone off suddenly to Altamont Castle. Can you tell me the cause of this unexpected departure ?”

The beginning of this sentence had been addressed to the Company in general, but the conclusion of it was more particularly directed to Julia :—at least she took it to herself, for she immediately answered with an affectation of indifference,

“ *I* am a very unlikely person indeed, to be informed of the reason of Colonel Algernon's move-

ments. You could not possibly have applied to a more unfortunate authority. I did not even know that he was gone."

Julia was aware that every Individual in the room must feel curious to observe what effect the intelligence she had just heard, would have upon her; and she struggled hard to conceal the violent emotion with which she was internally agitated. She could not entirely succeed; those who knew her best, perceived that her feelings were acutely mortified,—and the Visitor went away puzzled, but not enlightened.

CHAP. XXIX.

Brabantio. "It is too true an evil. Gone she is :

"Where didst thou see her!—Oh unhappy Girl!—

"With the Moor, saidst thou!—Who would be a Father!

"—— ——— Are they married think you?

Rodorigo. "Truly I think they are.

Brabantio. "How got she out? —— ———

"O treason of the blood! —— ———

"Fathers from hence trust not your Daughter's minds

"By what you see them act."

SHAKSPEARE.

JULIA asked her Companions when they returned from their Dinner party if they had heard any further intelligence of Colonel Algernon? Emily replied 'that they had not,—That he had been much talked of, but that except the fact of his departure, nobody seemed to know any thing about him.'

Julia's enquiry had been made in a careless manner, and she appeared perfectly satisfied with the answer she received to it. Indeed her conduct the following day, led her Relations to hope that a few

hours of calm reflection had brought her to a much better and more amenable state of mind. Her air of stubborn indignation was gone, and although she still at times looked thoughtful and unhappy, she no longer refused to enter into what was going on around her. Occasionally she assumed even more than her former gaiety, but at these moments it was evident that her wild spirits were forced and unnatural.

Without affecting to notice that any thing unusual had happened, Emily and her Cousins strove by every means they could devise, to comfort and amuse her ; but by some unaccountable perversity in her disposition, she always seemed to be rendered more melancholy when they had shown her any peculiar mark of kindness or affection.

A very short time before Colonel Algernon left the neighbourhood, Emily Shirley had received a Letter from her old Acquaintance Mrs. Sutton, informing her ‘ that She and Miss Drake had just began a progress of Visits in Devonshire,’ and stating ‘ that if it would be agreeable to Sir William Shirley and Mr. and Mrs. Vernon to see them, and likewise perfectly

convenient to take them in ; it would give very great pleasure to her Sister and herself to spend a couple of days with such valued and excellent Friends.'

Sir William did not feel much inclination to welcome the good Ladies, but it was impossible to decline their offer ; and Mrs. Vernon who had known them in the days of their youth, had some curiosity to meet them again, since she understood that the difference of age was the least alteration that had taken place in them since that period.

Emily looked forward to their visit with much satisfaction, because she knew that they had very lately been staying at Fauconberg Manor, and that she should be able to hear an accurate report from them of Adelaide's health. Her own Letters had described it as materially improved, but she did not feel quite sure that she might in this instance rely implicitly upon her account of herself.

An early day was fixed for the arrival of the Guests. They did not make their appearance till after the Dinner Bell had rung, and they came in of course in a grand fuss. The Spring of their Carriage had

broken and delayed them upon the road ; and the derangement caused by this accident, and their dismay at having kept their Friends waiting for them, had thrown them into a ludicrous state of distress.

Julia pretended to pity them extremely, and lamented their misfortunes in a pathetic tone and with a gravity of countenance, that delighted Mrs. Sutton, but could not so easily impose upon Miss Drake.

Mrs. Vernon very soon contrived however to set them at their ease, and before the evening was half over, she had put them both into the best and happiest humour, by recalling past scenes to their recollection and talking to them of former times.

She was much amused with the look of curiosity they had each of them at first bestowed upon her Daughters, and she was very willing to give them credit for sincerity, when they afterwards expressed to her the approbation that had resulted from this scrutiny.

“ Miss Vernon is extremely like what you were at her age,” observed Mrs. Sutton. “ And both She and her Sister look as amiable as they are pretty.”

“ They have a good right to be amiable by birth,” said Miss Drake, “ and I will answer for their having been admirably brought up.”

“ It is quite a pleasure,” continued Mrs. Sutton, “ to see such charming, unaffected Girls.—Young Ladies in these days, are so conceited, and give themselves such airs, that they absolutely provoke me ;—I have no patience with them !”

“ I am afraid,” replied Mrs. Vernon, “ that generally speaking your censure is too just, but very many exceptions to your remark are still, I am persuaded to be found.”

“ Oh certainly,” answered Miss Drake, “ there are exceptions to all General Rules. For instance, Miss Shirley must I fancy be a great Favorite with her Relations, as she is with every body else.—Do you not think her wonderfully improved since the last time you were at Greyfield ?”

“ Indeed I do. I was always particularly fond of Emily, I found her so gentle and engaging ; and I felt very sure that her good sense would sooner or later lead her to correct those little failings which I own were formerly perceptible in her character.”

“Your penetration has been accurately verified,” observed Miss Drake, “for she has undoubtedly become every thing her Friends can wish her.—I do not know when it will be in my power to say quite as much of Miss Julia.”

“Julia,” replied Mrs. Vernon, “is in every respect a very different Person from her Sister. There is much I confess in her conduct and disposition that requires improvement, but I am inclined to hope that she also will grow wiser when she grows older.”

Miss Drake looked incredulous, but she made no answer; and at this moment Emily Shirley came up to her, to ask how she had left all her Friends at Fauconberg Manor, and particularly what she thought of Adelaide’s health?

“Her Mother seems satisfied about her,” said she, “so I trust she is regaining her strength, but she looks wretchedly ill poor Thing, and is altogether in a miserably nervous and uncomfortable state.—I believe she was a good deal overcome at seeing Mrs. Sutton and Me. You may recollect that we happened to be staying in the House when that unfortunate and extraordinary rupture with Colonel Henry Algernon

took place. All Adelaide's concerns are perfectly incomprehensible, but we have known her from a Child, and we are so much attached to her, that we cannot bear to imagine she has been in fault. Every body does wrong sometimes, and even supposing *She* may have done so, there is no denying that she has been very severely punished for it."

"I do not pretend," replied Emily with much warmth, "to be better acquainted than the rest of the world, with the secret motives of Adelaide's conduct, but I am firmly convinced that if they could be made known to us, we should discover that she deserved to be exonerated from all blame."

Miss Drake was much pleased with Emily's generous defence of her Friend, and she proceeded to give her the various messages she had brought from Adelaide, and to enter into numerous details of what had passed at Fauconberg,—all of which were more or less interesting to Miss Shirley.

"Do look at Emily," said Julia to Louisa Vernon. "Did you ever see any thing so delightful as her devotion to Miss Drake? It far exceeds my pathetic

sympathy for the misfortunes of her Journey; which I considered at the time as a very masterly piece of acting in its way.—She really seems to devour her words with as much eagerness as if she was listening to an account of her absent Lover, instead of hearing the particulars of the convalescence and proceedings of Adelaide Fauconberg,—illustrated doubtless by sundry tedious Annotations and Reflections.”

This observation was made in an under tone, but it did not escape the quick ear of Miss Drake.

Without affecting to have noticed it, she went on quietly saying to Emily, ‘ that it would not now be very long before she saw the Fauconbergs again, as they intended to be in Town early in the Spring ; and that she rather suspected from a hint which had been thrown out by Sir George, that they had some thoughts of afterwards taking Adelaide to the South of France,—which in *Her* opinion would be a most excellent plan as the dear Invalid had found so much benefit from going Abroad upon a former occasion.’ Then raising her voice and fixing her eyes upon Julia, Miss Drake remarked, “ by the way talking of Colo-

nel Henry Algernon puts me in mind of his Cousin. He was staying in the same House with us the other day, and though he is certainly very handsome, and may doubtless be very clever,—we were far from being captivated with what we saw and heard of his manners and his character. We were to have met him again; but sudden departures appear to be quite the fashion in his Family. We were told he had received a Summons to return to his Grandfather at a moment's warning."

Julia felt that she had deserved this attack, yet it galled her deeply, and her eyes flashed fire as she said with a sneer, "that if Colonel Algernon was tired of the society he had been living in, she thought he was very wise in leaving it; and that a speedy removal had spared him the pain of bidding farewell to his numerous kind Friends."

Mrs. Sutton had been all this time entertaining Mrs. Vernon with one of her interminable Histories. After the Gentlemen came in, the conversation was more general, and when the tea was taken away, Sir William Shirley proposed a Rubber at Whist.

In the course of the Evening however, Miss Drake found an opportunity of asking Louisa Vernon about her Brothers, and enquiring particularly where the Captain was at present? On being told that he was with his Regiment, and informed where it was quartered, she observed,

“Then you do not expect him to join your Party while you are here?”

“Oh, no,” replied Louisa. “He paid us a long visit in the Autumn when we were all assembled at home; and we cannot hope to have him with us again for a great while.”

It would be a tedious task to detail minutely the occurrences and conversations of the two following days. They passed agreeably enough, for the Guests were determined to be pleased with every thing, and felt much gratified at perceiving how anxious the whole party were to amuse them. They talked incessantly, related their most entertaining Anecdotes; and Sir William Shirley declared,

“He had never before seen Mrs. Sutton and Miss Drake half so pleasant; that he was sure their meet-

ing with his Sister had made them fancy themselves quite young again."

Julia alone felt excessively annoyed by their presence. She was aware that they had heard enough of her affairs to be curious to learn under what circumstances She and Colonel Algernon had parted. She knew that they observed her narrowly ; and their inquisitorial glances were peculiarly disagreeable to her.

The mutual dislike that existed between her and Miss Drake, gave rise to a continual war of words, and though neither of them wished to carry matters to extremity, or to provoke a quarrel ; many very cutting and unpleasant things were said by both. It was therefore with the most heartfelt satisfaction that Julia watched their Carriage drive away from the door ; and she did not scruple to express pretty loudly her unfeigned joy at their departure. Her Cousins were going out riding, and she announced her intention of taking a long walk ' that she might enjoy solitude and silence undisturbed,—which would be a real luxury after having been condemned to hear

the eternal monotonous gabble of Mrs. Sutton's tongue; and the still more abominable,—shrill, discordant tones of Miss Drake's voice, for three mortal mornings and evenings.'

The wind had been very cold, and after Dinner Julia complained of a bad tooth-ache. Her face looked much flushed, and she said she felt altogether so stupid and uncomfortable, that she proposed going to bed very early. Every one expressed kind and sincere concern for her suffering, and as her Father affectionately wished her good night, he observed "it was a pity Mrs. Sutton was gone, as *She* would have been sure to have suggested at least fifty infallible remedies, any of which would have been warranted to quiet the refractory Tooth in less than five minutes."

"Oh pray do not mention Mrs. Sutton and Miss Drake," exclaimed Julia, "the sight of them at this moment would actually kill me! The very sound of their names has given me an additional twinge of pain. I hope I shall not dream of them."

The next morning Julia said that her tooth-ache

was much better, but she looked as if she had spent a restless night. The Sun was shining brightly after a heavy rain, and the showers that had fallen had so sensibly warmed the air; that Mrs. Vernon proposed to pay a round of distant Visits which she had for some time had in contemplation. She selected the two Emily's as her Companions during her drive; and as Julia declared 'she should not venture out of doors for fear of bringing back the pain in her face;' Louisa Vernon offered to give up her projected ride with her Father and Sir William Shirley, that she might stay at home and keep her company.

Julia thanked her Cousin for her intended kindness, but would by no means agree to her making such a sacrifice for her sake.

"She should be quite miserable," she said, "if Louisa were to shut herself up in the House the whole of such a beautiful day, because *She* happened to be a prisoner. She could contrive to amuse herself very well alone for a few hours. She had a number of things to do, which would perhaps have remained for ever undone, if so tempting an opportunity of set-

ting about them, had not occurred.—And that it was upon the whole a fortunate circumstance that She, who was famed for being idle and untidy, should at least upon one occasion in her life, have plenty of occupation upon her hands.—As soon as you are all fairly gone out,” she concluded, “I shall retire to my own room, and begin my grand arrangements.—I am not even sure that I may not lock my door to prevent the intrusion of my Maid. And when I am completely fatigued with my labours, I can lie down upon my bed and rest myself. I did not sleep a great deal in the night.”

Louisa saw that her Cousin was determined to spend her morning in her own way, so she made no further attempt to remain with her. The moment she returned from her ride however she went up stairs to look for Julia, but she did not find her in her room. Upon asking the Servant if he knew where she was? She was considerably surprised by his telling her that ‘he believed Miss Julia was gone out walking.’ ‘It is very strange!’ thought Louisa. ‘But as the afternoon has been so remarkably fine,

I suppose she has changed her mind; and fancied that a little fresh air could not possibly do her any harm.'

She strolled out into the Shrubbery to meet her Cousin, for as that was the warmest and most sheltered walk near the House, she imagined she had probably directed her steps thither;—but she went quite to the end of the Walk without seeing any traces of Julia. She perceived as she repassed the Drawing Room Windows, that she was not there; the evening was closing fast, and as Louisa re-entered the House, she thought to herself, “she *must* be come in by this time. She is hiding herself somewhere to escape my reproaches, but I am determined to discover her retreat, and call her to account for the slippery trick that she has played us all.”

Within the apartment which was jointly occupied by the Miss Shirleys, there was a little Dressing Room, where Emily frequently retired when she wished to write a Letter, or to read any thing that required particular attention. It now occurred to Louisa that Julia had probably entrenched herself

within this Sanctum, and she was confirmed in her opinion when she found that the door was locked. She recollected that her Cousin had threatened to turn her key against all Intruders, and she was not very much surprised by her refusing even to give any answer to her entreaties for admittance. She began to fancy the Servant had been mistaken in thinking he had seen Julia go out walking,—and that she had really been shut up all day in the retreat she had chosen. She therefore resolved to make no further attempt to disturb her in her mysterious occupations, and went quietly to her own room to take off her Riding Habit.

It was very late when the Ladies returned from their drive; and they were still giving an account of their visits to Sir William and Mr. Vernon, when the Miss Shirleys' Maid put her head into the room and requested to speak a few words to the Baronet in private.

He instantly left the Circle in which he was standing, and the Woman told him with much agitation,

“That she was afraid Miss Julia must be ill, or that

something must have happened to her;—for she had locked herself up in her Dressing-Room, and that she could not get a single word from her, though she had put her mouth close to the key-hole, and informed her over and over again that it was long past dressing time, and that Mrs. Vernon and the Ladies were all come home.”

Sir William rushed up stairs. He shook the handle of the door violently, but with no other effect than to assure himself that it was fastened! He called loudly to Julia by her name, but no answer was returned! He desired her immediately to admit him, or at least to speak to him,—if she did not intend to drive him perfectly distracted;—but all was still silent! Sir William turned pale, he staggered back a few paces as if he was scarcely able to support himself,—and in a voice almost choaked by emotion, he ordered the trembling Maid to run instantly and call somebody to break open the door.

Emily observed the summons her Father had received, and when she found that he did not return to the Drawing-Room, she became alarmed, and deter-

mined to follow him. His loud exclamations attracted her to her own Apartment, and she reached it just soon enough to hear the last words he had spoken.

“ This Key,” said she, hastily removing one from the lock she still held in her hand, “ will open the door of the Dressing-Room.” Then starting, and suddenly horror-stricken at perceiving Sir William’s haggard appearance,—“ My dear Papa,” she cried, in a tone of agony, “ What can be the matter with you? Something very dreadful must have taken place!”

“ You have no cause to be frightened upon *my* account,” replied the Baronet in a low and agitated voice.

“ But, my beloved Emily, you had better go down stairs. It is necessary that I should open this door immediately,—and I cannot,—I have not the heart to do so while *You* are here.”

Emily shook almost convulsively from head to foot, yet it was in a firm tone that she answered,

“ And do you think it possible that I can leave you when I know that you are in such a state of distress?—No,—if any shocking calamity has indeed befallen us, we will meet it together. And surely by

so doing we shall be the better enabled to support it. Let *me* turn the Key for you, I have been more accustomed to manage that lock than any one else."

"My matchless Child," exclaimed Sir William, "I cannot be sufficiently thankful for the comfort and support I possess in *You*. I feel it strongly in this hour of trial; and I am now more sensible than ever I was, that there is no affliction which your amiable and dutiful affection does not possess the power to mitigate."

There was indescribable anguish in the hurried and apprehensive glance which both Father and Daughter cast around the little Dressing-Room the instant the door was unclosed. And this gave place to an expression of astonishment and dismay, when they ascertained that the Object of their anxiety had still eluded their search, and that wherever Julia might be, she had certainly not concealed herself there. They looked at each other in silence, and seemed mutually reluctant to give utterance to their fears. The furniture before them was in some confusion, as if it had been recently moved, and various things were likewise scattered about the floor.

“What is that you have found, my Love?” asked Sir William, who observed that Emily was very attentively perusing a paper which she had discovered upon the table.

She was quite unable to make him any reply, but she put the scrawl she had just read, into his hands, and throwing herself upon a chair, she burst into tears.

The Note which had so deeply affected her, was an unsealed Billet written by Julia, and merely containing the following words.

“I do not venture to address this communication particularly, to any of my Relations. I dare not hope that my Father will forgive the step I am just going to take. All responsibility concerning my future happiness or misery will now rest upon my own head; but I trust that those who have hitherto shown me so much kindness and affection, will not entirely renounce their interest in my fate when I inform them that before they hear of me again, I shall have become the Wife of Colonel Algernon.”

“Unhappy Girl,” exclaimed Sir William. “She

has rushed with misguided obstinacy upon her own ruin ! A few moments ago, I trembled for her life, and would have given worlds to be told that she was well :—and now that I have received that assurance from herself, it has come in such a shape, that I almost feel it would have been a blessed circumstance for her, and a less distressing trial for us all, if my original fears had been realized.”

The report of Julia’s disappearance spread rapidly through the House, and Mr. and Mrs. Vernon and their Daughters hastened to ascertain its truth, and to offer their advice and condolence to Sir William and Emily. They found them in great need of comfort and consolation, and nobody knew better than they did, how to afford it.

The Baronet’s first idea was to set out in immediate pursuit of the Fugitives, and endeavour if possible to overtake them before a Marriage could have been effected ; but upon consideration, there seemed very little chance of succeeding in such an attempt. They must have gained a start of several hours at least. There was not the slightest clue to discover in what direction they had fled ; and as poor Sir William

observed, "Even if he could be fortunate enough to rescue his Daughter, and bring her home again now, he should have too much reason to fear that she who had contrived thus cruelly to deceive him once, would very soon find the means of doing so a second time." He looked upon the misfortune which had fallen upon him as irremediable; and though he determined to submit to it as patiently as he could, he felt very painfully that this would prove no easy task.

Could Julia have witnessed the bitter agony of her Father's grief; the keen, but touching and quiet affliction of Emily; and the deep distress into which she had plunged her whole Family; her stubborn heart must have been melted with feelings of horror and remorse, and she must have shuddered at the consciousness of the wicked and unnatural conduct which had caused all this misery.

But she was then hurrying away from her Friends, her home, and all the recollections connected with both,—as speedily as four Post Horses could carry her; and her greatest anxiety arose from the fear of being unable to fly fast enough to be perfectly secure from all danger of being overtaken.

CHAP. XXX.

- Lysander.* — — — — — “ If thou lov’st me then,
“ Steal forth thy Father’s house to-morrow night ;
“ And in the Wood, a league without the Town,
“ Where I did meet thee once with Helena,
“ To do observance to a morn of May,
“ There will I stay for thee.
- Hermia.* “ By all the vows that ever Men have broke,
“ In number more than ever Women spoke ;—
“ In that same place thou hast appointed me,
“ To-morrow truly will I meet with thee.”

SHAKSPEARE.

WHEN Colonel Algernon and Sir William Shirley parted after their last interview, the former felt outrageously indignant at the insulting and injurious treatment he imagined he had received; and he firmly resolved to revenge it in the manner which would at once prove most deeply galling to the Baronet, and most agreeable to his own inclination.

The prospect of being suddenly obliged to break off his acquaintance with Julia, had convinced him

that he liked her better,—or in other words that her society was more essential to his happiness, than he had before suspected. He had fallen in love with her the very first evening he had met her; but as he knew that she had little or no fortune, and was fully aware what an inconvenient incumbrance a Wife who was without one, would prove to him; it is extremely probable that he would never have thought seriously of marrying her, if he had not been urged to do so by the opposition he encountered from her Father.

“ Sir William,” muttered he to himself as he rode away from him, “ has felt much unnecessary alarm. I had no intention of requesting him to bestow upon me either of his precious Daughters; but since he seems to consider me unworthy of receiving such an honour at his hands, the case is changed, and I shall be much mistaken if I do not show him that I am able to win the fair Julia’s heart, and to obtain her plighted faith, without asking his consent, and even in direct defiance of his prohibition.—I cannot bear the idea of renouncing the Daughter, and my pride is piqued to humble the insolence of the Father.

Despicable as I may be, there are people in the world who would not reject with disdain, the prospect of an Alliance with the Heir of the ancient House of Altamont."

Leaving Horace to indulge his own reflections and form his future plans, we must return to Julia who has already been described as feeling sufficiently miserable, on the morning after the Scene that has just been alluded to.

She had, in the most stubborn and ungracious manner declined accompanying her Sister and her Cousins in their walk ; but finding herself afterwards too much excited to be able to remain quietly in the House, she threw on her bonnet and her cloak, and wandered out alone. She breathed more freely when she found herself in the open air, and she hurried onward at a rapid pace without being at all conscious in what direction she was proceeding.

The intelligence of Colonel Algernon's sudden departure to Altamont Castle had startled and mortified her beyond expression. She had fondly flattered herself that the wild and headstrong attachment

she entertained for him had at least been mutual ; and she wept with mingled grief and indignation at discovering how readily he had been satisfied to give her up. She despised,—she condemned from the bottom of her heart—the falsehood and treachery of all Young Men ;—she censured—she rebelled against the harshness and cruelty of all Fathers ;—she hated the whole world and every thing in it ;—and while she looked with the greatest contempt upon her own weakness, she felt how perfectly unable she was to renounce and overcome it. In short she was in that sort of phrensied state, when the evil passions have obtained so complete and fearful an ascendancy in the mind ; that their victim is disposed to rush headlong into the most desperate schemes, and to adopt the first wild suggestion that may present itself.

Julia was at length recalled to her recollection by observing that her footsteps were dogged by a tall, strange looking Man in a Sailor's Dress, who appeared to have been watching her for some time. He did not seem anxious to overtake her, but he followed her at an easy measured pace, which made

it evident that he had the power to diminish the distance between them at any moment when he might feel the inclination to do so. She became much alarmed, and upon casting her eyes around her, she was very disagreeably surprised to find how far she had rambled from home. It was growing rather late, the Labourers had all returned from their work, and not a Creature was to be seen in the fields. She dared not face the Stranger, by retracing her path; and the only course that presented itself to her, was to walk on to the nearest group of Cottages, which she knew to be about a quarter of a mile from the spot where she then was. She affected not to notice the Sailor, yet she ventured from time to time to reconnoitre his progress; and she thought she perceived that he began to gain ground upon her. She endeavoured, though imperceptibly, to quicken her own steps; and she had for a little space altogether lost sight of him,—when in turning a sharp corner of the road, she was horrified at discovering that by making a short cut across a field, he had got on before her, and was standing in the centre of the

road—as if with the intention of arresting her further advance.

Julia felt that flight was impossible; her Spirit was naturally daring, and though she trembled internally, she resolved to confront the Sailor with the boldest face she could assume. His hat had been drawn down over his brow to conceal his features,—but he raised it as she drew near; and in a tone that thrilled to her heart, and instantly dispelled her apprehensions, while it encreased her outward agitation,—he besought her not to be alarmed at his uncouth and extraordinary appearance. She fixed her eyes attentively upon his countenance for a single moment, to assure herself that the figure who stood before her was really Horace Algernon;—and then feeling irresistibly amused at the effect of the disguise he had adopted, and still more at the ludicrously submissive attitude in which he bent towards her, as suitable to the character it was his pleasure to feign; she burst into an hysterical fit of laughter.

As soon as she had sufficiently recovered her composure to be able to speak to him, she said,

“ You have absolutely frightened me out of my wits. I had no reason to expect to see you here at all, much less to meet you in this ridiculous sort of masquerade. I heard that you were gone to Altamont Castle.”

“ I intend to go there to-morrow morning,” replied Horace ; and it was in an accent of reproach that he added,

“ You surely could not imagine that I had departed without making an effort to take leave of You?—After what passed yesterday between Sir William Shirley and myself, of which I conclude you have been informed ; it was impossible for me to present myself openly as a Visitor at his door ; but I determined to endeavour to see you by stratagem.—I declared to my Friends, my purpose of setting out upon my journey by day-break this morning, and I actually got into my Carriage, at an unusually early hour ; but instead of taking the direct road to my Grandfather’s, I drove to a secluded Village where I exchanged my own clothes for the dress in which you now see me. I had provided myself with this

Disguise to avoid the danger of being recognised by any of your Family I might chance to meet, and I thought my appearance was so completely altered by my borrowed raiment, that I ventured to approach within sight of your windows without the least fear that I should be known.—From ten o'clock, I patiently watched every avenue to your abode, with the hope of being able to obtain the interview I so earnestly desired; and had I been unfortunate enough to fail in achieving the Object of my wishes, I have a Note now in my pocket which I would have found means to convey to your hands unknown to your Relations.—I saw your Sister and the Miss Vernons go out walking without You; and I was beginning to despair of your following their example, when to my inexpressible delight I perceived a solitary Figure steal from the door, and pursue an opposite course to the one they had previously taken. I dared not speak, or make myself known to you until you were beyond all reach of dangerous or impertinent observation; but I followed the direction you had taken; and if you will permit me to do so, I believe I may here

have an opportunity of opening my whole mind to you without fear of interruption from any one."

The anger Julia had felt against Colonel Algernon, vanished entirely, or rather gave place to increased approbation, when she learnt the proof he has thus given her of his devotion. She listened with secret triumph and satisfaction to the ardent declaration of deep and unalterable attachment, which her encouraging reception emboldened him to pour forth:— And she was even imprudent enough to confess ' that if her Father's cruel Mandate had not forbidden her to express such sentiments, she should not perhaps have been unwilling to acknowledge that the preference he professed for her, was in some degree returned.'

" And will you, dearest Julia," exclaimed Horace, passionately, " consent tamely to sacrifice your own inclination, and my future happiness,—the happiness of a person who adores you!—at the shrine of duty? Had I found you cruel, or even cold; I must have torn myself away from you and attempted to reconcile myself to my wretched fate. But since you

allow me to flatter myself that I am not indifferent to you, no earthly power shall ever induce me to relinquish the hope of overcoming the barrier which at present opposes itself to our union."

"Alas!" replied Julia, "What can you wish me to do? There is little chance of your being able to remove the deep-rooted prejudice my Father unfortunately entertains against you; and in defiance of *his* authority, I dare not even engage to keep up any further communication with you.—My Brother too, it seems, has been pleased to signify his disapprobation of my having seen so much of you lately. I am not particularly obliged to William for his kind interference in my concerns, and I certainly do not consider myself the least bound to be guided by his counsel."

"I am almost afraid," said Horace, "to implore you to be guided by mine; yet I cannot resist the temptation of endeavouring to persuade you to judge and act for yourself in a matter of such vital interest and importance to us both:—a question in short which *we* are the persons best qualified to decide,

since it concerns *us* much more nearly than it possibly can do any body else. Why should you not at once bless me with the assurance that you will bestow upon me that hand, which I should value a thousand times more dearly as your own free Gift, than if I received it with the sanction and approbation of all the Fathers in the world? Oh my beloved Julia," (he threw himself upon his knees before her as he spoke,) "if it is indeed true that you feel a warm, a sincere regard for me;—if you really believe that it would be in my power to render you happy;—do not, do not hesitate to promise me that you will unite your fate with mine.—You will not speak to me," he continued, as Julia stood silent and irresolute, almost resolving to grant his request, yet half frightened at the desperate step he had nearly prevailed upon her to hazard. "Time steals on; every moment is precious; You may be missed, sought for; and if we are separated before you have made a final decision in my favour,—I have too much reason to apprehend that the arguments and influence of your Relations may persuade you to renounce me for ever."

“No;” replied Julia, quickly, “This is no season for dissimulation, or I might not perhaps be inclined to tell you fairly that *Your* eloquence is more powerful with me than that of all my Family put together,—And to prove to you that it is so, I now give you my solemn promise that you shall receive my Vows at the Altar, in spite of my Father’s prohibitions, my Brother’s displeasure, and the opposition of every one of my Kindred.”

Horace’s professions of gratitude and devotion were cut short by the necessity of terminating a conference which, had it detained Julia much longer from home must have awakened the suspicion of her Friends, and thereby endangered the success of the scheme her Admirer meditated putting very speedily into execution. He declared he should run no risk of detection if he accompanied her to the edge of the plantation that screened out the House from the view of the high road,—and that his doing so would give them time to discuss their future plans.

Julia agreed to the expediency of this proposal; she was in no hurry to dismiss her Companion, and

as the road she had to retrace was a very solitary one, she was perhaps not sorry to retain his Guardianship.

He told her ‘that in order to baffle the curiosity of their Neighbours and elude all observation, it was desirable he should adhere to his original intention of returning immediately to Altamont Castle. And that while he affected to consider that his acquaintance with her was entirely at an end,—he would there employ himself in concerting the best means of effecting an Elopement to the Continent, where a private Marriage might be performed with much greater ease than in England.’ He said ‘that it would be dangerous to trust their project to paper, he would therefore make no attempt to correspond with her ;—But that when all his arrangements were settled, he would try to see her again, that they might talk them over together? and that she should then receive some short written communication from him, requesting her to appoint the time and place at which she might be able to meet him.’ Finally, he conjured her to recollect how much depended upon her own discretion. Advised her to be particularly circumspect in her beha-

viour towards her Family, and to lead them to believe she cared so little about himself, that she was satisfied to conform to her Father's wishes,—and to forget him.

Julia assured him, ‘ that he need not be afraid of her betraying their secret either by look, word, or deed.’ And when Horace was at length obliged to bid her farewell, they separated with the cheering hope that after one more interview, and at no very distant period, they should meet again to be parted no more.

Had Julia's Relations been aware of her clandestine agreement with Colonel Algernon, they would have been at no loss to account for that sudden alteration in her conduct, which they had attributed to far better motives. Even after the first delirium of her excitement had had time to subside, she was too much blinded by her attachment, to regret the rash and unjustifiable Engagement into which she had allowed herself to be hurried. Yet she was not so entirely unprincipled as to feel easy or comfortable under the consciousness of the deceit she was practicing upon those who deserved a very different return

for their kindness towards her. She became irritable, restless, and miserable; and she grew extremely anxious and impatient to learn from Horace when he was likely to come and claim the fulfilment of her promise, and relieve her from the state of disquietude and self-reproach to which her undutiful behaviour had reduced her.

One morning while the Miss Shirleys were dressing, their Maid brought them a packet of printed papers from a Shopkeeper in the Neighbourhood, who was desirous of recommending his goods. They had been left at the door by a Man who said he was employed to distribute them, and were folded up in the shape of Letters.

Each of the young Ladies had one of these Addresses separately directed to herself, and had they not been sealed, it is most probable that Julia would never have taken the trouble of opening hers. She glanced her eye over its contents, and was not a little startled at observing the following brief announcement written in pencil at the bottom of the printed Form.

“Every thing is now ready to be submitted to your approbation. Please therefore to address one line to A. C. to inform me when and where I may have the honour of waiting upon you.”

Julia's face became crimson,—she read the precious words over and over again that she might be quite sure of their import, and also fix them in her memory ; and then pretending to be angry with the Shopkeeper, she threw the Letter into the fire, exclaiming as she did so, “How can people be troublesome enough to bore one with these sort of applications ? It is really too abominable.”

“Pray do not agitate yourself so violently upon the subject,” said Emily, looking at her Sister with surprise. “The poor Man had no intention of offending us, and as we are not obliged to purchase his Wares, we may at least forgive him for recommending them to us.”

It was on the day of Mrs. Sutton's and Miss Drake's expected arrival, that Julia received this curious communication from Colonel Algernon. She lost no time

in answering it, and she despatched her Letter to the Post Office by a trusty Boy who was unable to read its direction. She was too well aware of the inquisitive disposition of the Visitors, and also of their acuteness and penetration,—to summon Horace to approach within the distance of a walk from her Father's House, while they continued to be its inmates; and it was this circumstance which rendered her so peculiarly impatient that they should take their departure. She had heard they had another engagement in the Neighbourhood, which must take them away at a given period; and upon the faith of this, she ventured to appoint her Lover to come again to the same spot where he had met her before; at the very moment when she calculated that the good Ladies would be travelling in another direction.

Their Carriage had scarcely driven from the door, when, (as already mentioned,) she announced her intention of taking a walk, and accordingly sallied forth towards the place of rendezvous. Horace had arrived there much earlier, and becoming impatient at her delay, had wandered on so far that at the very en-

trance of the Shrubbery, Julia descried the tall Figure and blue Jacket which had once given her such unnecessary alarm.

She was at first startled at finding him thus close to the House, but recollecting that none of her Family would be the least likely to interrupt it,—she proposed that their conference should take place in a Rustic Arbour which was completely screened from the view of the windows.

Horace told her that he had made all the possible preparations to facilitate their flight, and that if it was attempted immediately, there was not the least probability of its meeting with any impediment;—but that even a short delay would be likely to derange his measures, and perhaps to defeat them altogether by leading to the danger of a discovery. He said that his own Chaise and four, driven by Post Boys who had been bribed to make good speed,—should be stationed in ambuscade about a quarter of a mile distant, in a retired Lane which led into the high road. That relays of Horses were ordered to be in readiness at every Stage until they should arrive at

the nearest convenient point upon the Sea Coast ; and that he had engaged the Master of a small Trading Vessel to cruise off the shore for the next two days, and to be upon the watch at a given signal to send out a Boat to take them on board, and convey them to France. His own Servant and a temporary Lady's Maid, who had lived with his Mother, were to meet them at the place of embarkation, and the Marriage Ceremony would of course be performed as soon as they landed upon the Continent.

Having explained all his arrangements, he conjured Julia if she did not repent her Engagement, to lose no time in consenting to fulfil it :—and he implored her to contrive, if it was practicable, to elope with him that very evening.

Julia's resolution had been too firmly taken to allow her to waver for an instant in her purpose, yet there was something very appalling in the idea of being so speedily severed from all her Family ; and although she shut her eyes to the future consequences of the action she meditated, she could not help feeling, and shuddering as she did so, that she was stand-

ing upon the brink of a Precipice from which she had lost the power of retreating. To remain stationary after having rushed on so far, was equally out of the question; in reply to Horace's solicitations, she therefore observed,

“ That her having summoned him to a second interview, was a sufficient proof that her sentiments and her determination were unaltered;—but that if she made any attempt to leave home that night, her absence must be inevitably and immediately discovered.—She could easily contrive,” she added, “ to steal out of the House unperceived in the course of the following morning, when her Father and her Companions were dispersed in different directions; and her flight would not then be discovered until she was too far distant to be very readily overtaken.”

Julia's subsequent disappearance has shown how successfully she accomplished her rash and undutiful project. Sir William Shirley's enquiries enabled him to ascertain that a Chaise and four had been seen driving at a furious rate along the road leading towards the Coast. He traced the progress of this

Equipage to the Sea Side, and learnt that it had contained a Lady and Gentleman, who had embarked on board a Vessel which appeared to have been waiting for them.—Here of course all clue to their future progress was lost; and the first distinct tidings which the unhappy Family obtained of the Fugitives, was seeing in the Newspaper that ‘Colonel Algernon and Miss Julia Shirley had been remarried in the Ambassador’s Chapel at Paris; the Ceremony having been previously performed at a small Town upon the French Coast.’

When Mr. Shirley received the intelligence of his Sister’s Elopement, he became perfectly frantic, and hurried into Devonshire to concert with his Father the best possible means of dissolving an Union he could not bear to think of,—and of taking vengeance upon Colonel Algernon for the insult he had offered to them all.

Sir William, and his other Relations endeavoured to reconcile him to an evil that was now irremediable; and they flattered themselves that they had at least persuaded him to relinquish all plans of open

and declared hostility against a Person, who however unworthily he had become so, was actually the Husband of his Sister.

As soon as Horace arrived at Paris, he wrote to his Mother and to Lord Altamont, to inform them of his Marriage; to request their forgiveness for having taken so important a step without previously consulting them; and to beseech they would allow him to bring his Wife to Altamont Castle, as he was extremely anxious to make her known to her new Relations.

Mrs. Algernon never thought that any thing her Son did, could be wrong; and as he was not in the habit of asking her advice, she was neither surprised or offended at his having neglected to pay her such a compliment upon the present occasion. She felt a childish sort of delight at the idea of his being married; and she was very ready to receive her Daughter-in-Law with open arms; and to suppose that the happy Object of Horace's choice, must undoubtedly be the most charming Creature in the whole world.

Lord Altamont was much shocked at his Grand-

son's unprincipled conduct; he sincerely regretted a proceeding which he was too well aware could not fail to have plunged a whole Family into grief and distress; and he was little inclined to form a favorable opinion of a young Lady who had not hesitated to abandon her own natural Friends, and to brave the censure of the world. Upon considering the matter more maturely, however, he could not help hoping that Horace's marriage might prove the fortunate means of establishing him at home, and rendering him steadier than he had hitherto been;—and he felt he had much reason to rejoice that the connection he had formed so rashly, was not a disreputable one. He answered his Letter very kindly, and after a moderate proportion of merited reproof, and admonition; assured him of his pardon, and invited him and Mrs. Algernon to come and make him a visit as soon as it might be agreeable to them to do so.

Lord Altamont wrote also to Sir William Shirley. He expressed much concern at his Grandson's unjustifiable behaviour; observed ‘that he trusted it was unnecessary for him to say that his plans and inten-

tions had been alike unknown and unsanctioned at Altamont Castle.' Added 'that he did not presume to petition Sir William to forgive Mrs. Algernon, or to enter into the merits or demerits of the case; but that he thought it might be a satisfaction to him to learn, that as she had now become so nearly related to himself, he should do every thing in his power to promote her future welfare and comfort; and that her Mother-in-Law was likewise prepared to receive her with the greatest kindness.'

This communication gave much comfort to the Baronet and to Emily, and the former gratefully acknowledged the obligation he felt to Lord Altamont, for the very considerate mark of attention he had thus shown towards him. He said 'that he cherished no resentful or unchristian feelings against his Daughter;—but as she had certainly wounded him in the tenderest point, he must be convinced of her repentance, and of her desire to obtain his pardon, before he could feel inclined to grant it to her.' And in conclusion he remarked, 'that in spite of her undutiful conduct, he still entertained so much affection for

her, that he rejoiced to find she was likely to meet with the undeserved good fortune of being so very kindly and graciously adopted by her Husband's Family.'

Colonel Algernon and Julia soon grew tired of Paris. The slender supply of money they had taken with them was nearly exhausted, and Horace proposed to his Bride that they should return to England, and accept Lord Altamont's invitation without delay. He told her truly, that he was exceedingly impatient to present her to his Relations; and he might have added 'that he was not less desirous to come to a speedy understanding with his Grandfather, to prevail upon him to pay the remainder of his debts; and to settle such an allowance upon him, as might enable him to maintain a comfortable establishment as a married Man,—and in short to live in a manner suitable to his rank and station in the world.

The announcement of her Son's approach threw Mrs. Algernon into an ecstasy of joy. Lord Altamont was much pleased at the prospect of seeing him. And the Fugitive Pair recrossed the Channel, under much happier auspices than the conduct of either of them seemed at all to merit.

CHAP. XXXI.

“ The hand of Douglass is his own ;
“ And never shall in friendly grasp
“ The hand of such as Marmion clasp.”—
“ Burned Marmion’s swarthy cheek like fire,
“ And shook his very frame for ire,
“ And—“ This to me !” he said,—”

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

Just before Mr. Shirley went into Devonshire, he had interested himself much about a Political Question of some importance which was likely soon to become a subject of public discussion. In talking it over one evening with his Father and Mr. Vernon, the latter told him that he believed if Arthur had been with them, he could have given him some curious and useful information upon several points connected with this affair; as many circumstances relating to it had at one time accidentally come much under his observation.

This hint was not lost upon Mr. Shirley, though he appeared to pay little attention to it at the moment.

The disappointment of all his other hopes, and the mortifications of various kinds which had overwhelmed him lately, had rendered him eager to plunge more deeply than ever into Politics. They afforded an occupation for his time, a diversion for his thoughts; and since domestic happiness was denied him, they held out at least a flattering chance of obtaining public fame and distinction.

After he returned to Town, he found that the Question above alluded to, would probably be brought forward at an earlier period than he had anticipated; he therefore thought of writing to Arthur Vernon to request he would communicate to him with as little delay as possible, all the knowledge he had obtained, as well as the opinions he had formed concerning it. Upon reflection however, he recollected how difficult it was to enter into long details upon paper, and how much more satisfactory it would be to have one hour's conversation with his Cousin than to receive a Volume of Letters from him.

Arthur's Regiment was Quartered in Kent; he determined to put himself into a Coach and pay him

a visit ; and he surprised him not a little by announcing his intention of coming to spend a couple of days with him. He would at all events have been a welcome Guest, but Arthur now considered him particularly so, as he was well aware that he was able to give him a very recent account of his Mother's health and of the proceedings of all his Relations in Devonshire.

He felt deeply interested too in Julia's fate, but upon that subject, he found Mr. Shirley was still so furious, and expressed such implacable resentment towards Colonel Algernon,—that any attempt upon his part to induce him to think of him less unfavorably, only encreased his irritation against him. He was even relieved when William turned the conversation into a new channel by frankly informing him of the purpose of his journey.

Arthur was no Politician, but he pointed out his own views very clearly upon the case proposed to him, and displayed an acuteness of observation, and a soundness of judgement that delighted his Cousin. He rejoiced that he had applied to so able a Coun-

seller, and he spent his time so pleasantly in his society, that he was sorry to leave him at the end of two days to go back to London. He had made an appointment with a Friend who happened to be going to Dover, that they should meet at that place and travel to Town together, and he could not therefore delay his return.

It chanced unfortunately that on the very morning William arrived at Dover, Colonel Algernon and Julia had landed there in their way to Altamont Castle.

Julia was much fatigued with the passage, and Horace left her to rest herself at the Inn while he went to make the necessary arrangements with the Custom House Officers, about their Baggage. As he was crossing the Street he almost stumbled against a Gentleman who appeared to have been too absent to have previously noticed him ;—this Person was William Shirley, who was walking about to kill the time till his Friend was ready to join him,—and who was beginning to be impatient and out of temper at his detaining him so long.

Both started, and their mutual astonishment when

they instantly recognised each other—may be better imagined than described.

Horace was the first who spoke. “Mr. Shirley,” said he, “we were formerly acquainted in Italy, and now that a near relationship has taken place between us, I hope we may consider ourselves upon terms of friendship when we happen to be thrown together. Such at least is *My* desire.”—And as he uttered these words, he half extended his hand towards his Brother-in-Law. But William drew himself up in the haughtiest manner; his face became crimson, and his whole frame trembled with indignation, as he replied,

“Colonel Algernon, I must beg to decline all future acquaintance or communication of any sort with a Person who was capable of clandestinely engaging my Sister’s affections, and dishonorably stealing her away from her home, after her Father had informed him that her Family did not consider him worthy of receiving her as his Wife.”

“For the sake of that Sister, I am willing to bear *much*,” answered Horace with a degree of forbearance and self-command he was not often accustomed

to exert; “but there is a limit to all endurance; and as I am not sure how long I may be able to controul my angry passions if they remain exposed to such provocation as your language seems likely to offer, I believe the sooner we now part the better. When we meet again, which in the common intercourse of Society, we must occasionally expect to do, we shall of course look upon each other as Strangers.”

As Horace turned away from him, Mr. Shirley said,

“I have no objection to consent to the neutrality you propose, but mark me well; Upon *my* part I shall only think myself bound to observe it while you continue to treat my Sister with kindness. The moment I find the slightest cause to suspect that you have behaved towards her with harshness or neglect, you may regard me as your avowed and deadliest Enemy; and may depend upon my never resting till I have avenged her wrongs.”

“When I deserve to undergo your censure for cruelty to my Wife,” replied Horace in a sneering, bitter tone, “I shall be very ready to submit to the

punishment such conduct will richly merit.—In the mean time I am determined that you shall not provoke me to quarrel with you.—Once more I bid you amicably Adieu.”

William was much more irritated by the coolness and temper with which Colonel Algernon had answered him, than he would perhaps have been by the most violent and offensive retort.

“Is there nothing,” muttered he to himself, “that can produce any impression upon him? He seems to be proof alike against reproaches and insults; but if he is not all adamant, I will touch a string that shall make him feel my power before we part; and teach him at the same opportunity that I have had sufficient reason to form an unfavorable opinion of his character.”

Horace had already walked some steps away, when Mr. Shirley called after him,

“Farewell Colonel Algernon;” and immediately added in a subdued tone, but quite loud enough to be distinctly heard by the ear for which it was intended,

“I think the Husband of Donna Basilia de Lerma

need not have been either surprised or offended at any anxiety that might be expressed by the Brother of her Successor respecting his future conduct towards his Sister."

Horace turned upon him, and demanded in a voice like thunder, "What he meant by the offensive insinuations he was mumbling to himself?"

His face was unnaturally pale, and his features were almost convulsed by the fury he had hitherto restrained.

Mr. Shirley looked at him for a moment with a fiend-like triumph, and then sarcastically observed, "that his own conscience must answer that question. If he had brought any false accusation against him, he should be both willing and happy to beg his pardon; but he happened to be much better acquainted with the history of his private adventures in Spain than he believed he was at all aware of."

"I do not see," exclaimed Horace, "What possible right, You or any one else can have to pry into my domestic proceedings during the period I was upon Service Abroad. Had I disgraced the charac-

ter of a British Officer, I should have been called to an account by much higher authority than yours. But those under whose command I was placed, bore honorable testimony to my conduct as a Soldier, and I returned to England with untarnished fame. The public have no business with any thing further; and since you are pleased to bring forward mysterious insinuations against *me*, are you quite sure that if I thought proper to retaliate upon you, and appeal to your conscience as you have just done to mine, that every secret transaction of your life, would bear the test of so severe and unexpected a scrutiny?"

This home thrust came so suddenly upon William that it stung him to desperation, and threw him completely off his guard.

"I have certainly many crimes to answer for," said he, "but I am yet guiltless of being a *Murderer*."

The last word was pronounced with emphasis, and it would be vain to attempt to describe the effect it produced upon Horace. He seemed for an instant perfectly bewildered, and then exclaimed in a deep, determined voice,

“This is more than Mortal Man can bear. Beware how you dare again to associate that term with any imputations connected with me, lest I should oblige you to forfeit your own life in order to save you the disgrace of being a Liar.”

“You know too well that I have spoken the truth,” replied Mr. Shirley, “But the altercation between us has now gone so far, that our dispute can never be settled until the life-blood of one or both of us has been shed. We have each said things which neither of us can possibly forget or forgive; and it only now remains to name the time and place of our next meeting.”

“After what has passed,” observed Horace, “it is unnecessary to assure you that that shall be done with the least possible delay upon my part. I never travel without my Pistols; but I must find some Friend to accompany me to the Field; and I shall have Letters to write, and arrangements to make respecting a future residence and comfortable Provision for my Widow, should I fall by your hands;—which must occupy me all the evening and the greater part of

the night. To-morrow morning I shall be prepared to attend your summons ;—and no hour you may fix, will be too early for me.”

The Brothers-in-Law separated, after Horace had mentioned that he should be found at the Inn ; and he returned there immediately. He was well acquainted with Mr. Jerningham, (one of the Passengers who had come over in the Packet with him from Calais :) and he was anxious to see him, as it occurred to him that *He* was the only Person he could ask to be his Second.

The request was speedily made, and at length acceded to, but Mr. Jerningham at first expressed great repugnance at the idea of being concerned in a Duel between such near Relations.

To Horace himself, the whole scene that had just taken place, appeared like the remembrance of a fearful Dream.—The vivid recollection which it had recalled of the past,—and the consciousness of the accumulated horrors of his present situation, had so completely overwhelmed him, that he was almost stupified ; and it was some time before he was capable of setting

about the arduous task of arranging his Affairs,—which he felt it was an imperious duty to perform to the best of his ability, and with all possible despatch.

The thought of seeing Julia was extremely painful to him, and he likewise dreaded that her quickness would enable her to discover that something had gone wrong with him. He was not mistaken, for the moment he rejoined her she was struck with the extraordinary alteration in his appearance and manner; and enquired with great anxiety and alarm what had happened to him?

He endeavoured to persuade her that her uneasiness was unfounded, and attempted to laugh away her apprehensions; but when she told him, ‘she was not to be deceived in that way,—that she was convinced some very distressing circumstance had occurred to discompose him;—He saw the necessity of inventing some plausible excuse to mislead her. He confessed that her penetration had enabled her to suspect a secret which it had been his intention to hide from her. He said ‘she was aware that he had been excessively extravagant, and had contracted immense

debts which he had no means of paying ; and that it was principally in consequence of these embarrassments, that he had been obliged before his marriage to live so much abroad. That Lord Altamont had engaged to settle his affairs for him, provided he would promise to establish himself permanently in England ; and that this had already in part been done, and would now be completed in a very short time. That unfortunately in walking from the Inn, he had met one of the most importunate of his Creditors,—that the Man had been excessively impertinent, and had threatened to arrest him if he did not receive full and immediate payment :—that he had consequently put himself into a violent passion, and it had altogether been a very unpleasant business. But that it had at length been tolerably well accommodated,—he had succeeded in pacifying the insolent Rascal :—and that as soon as they arrived at Altamont Castle, he should be relieved from all further annoyance upon that score.’

Julia was unacquainted with the value of money, and perfectly ignorant of every thing connected with

pecuniary transactions. She had hitherto looked upon debts as inconvenient incumbrances, but it had never come in her way to observe or to feel the misery and discomfort they occasioned.

The very idea of Horace's being arrested, thrown into a Prison!—petrified her with horror;—and to prevent the possibility of such a calamity, she proposed that they should leave Dover that very instant, and travel without stopping, till they reached Altamont Castle.

Her Husband told her ‘ that so speedy a departure was quite unnecessary, as all his measures were amicably arranged. That he should have the trouble of writing some long Letters upon the Subject,—and that it was probable he might have a short interview with his Tormentor that night, and a longer one early the next morning,—but that these would only be in the way of business,—and boring and disgusting as they were, must be submitted to to avoid more disagreeable consequences.’

Julia did not feel entirely satisfied with this explanation.

“ I hope,” said she in a melancholy tone, “ that all is indeed comfortably settled with this abominable Man. I trust you have not concealed any thing from me.” And Horace’s behaviour during the rest of the evening was occasionally so wild, that it was little calculated to relieve her anxiety.

It is now time to return to William Shirley.

He was soon joined by his future travelling Companion, who was much surprised at the state of excitement in which he found him; and extremely shocked when he informed him ‘ that he had a few moments before met the Villain who had ran away with his Sister,—that high words had passed between them, and that their accidental conference did not terminate until a Challenge had been given by himself, and accepted by the Person who had so deeply injured him.’

In vain did Mr. Shirley’s Friend use every argument he could think of, to moderate his resentment, and prove to him that his intended Duel—whatever might be its consequences—could bring nothing but misery upon his own head as well as upon all those

who were related to him.—He represented the agony and despair to which it would reduce his unfortunate Sister; but he could not succeed in making the slightest impression upon William's feelings. His mind was wrought up to such a state phrensy, that he hardened himself against every consideration but the prospect of indulging his vengeance; and only regretted that so many hours must still elapse before his destined meeting with Colonel Algernon could take place.

Horace's striking likeness to his Cousin Henry, by awakening various galling recollections of his own, had perhaps contributed far more forcibly to excite Mr. Shirley's implacable and unnatural hatred for him, than any anger he felt towards him upon Julia's account.—But so little do we know ourselves, that he did not suspect what was the Secret Spring by which he was actuated.

Though his Friend had no power to deter him from his purpose, he kindly determined not to desert him in the hour of danger. He went to Colonel Algernon to arrange the preliminaries of the Meeting,

and was referred by him to Mr. Jerningham, with whom every thing was soon settled. The Parties were to be upon the ground at an early hour the following morning; and the place selected for the Duel, was a retired spot where they were little likely to be interrupted. To avoid exciting suspicion, and to prevent the chance of Mrs. Algernon's hearing that her Brother was under the same roof as herself, —Mr. Shirley and his Friend were to leave Dover at night, and proceed as if they were anxious to reach Town without delay; but by stopping at the first stage, they would afterwards have very little distance to retrace.

Horace approved of all that had been decided, but he could by no effort shake off the unusual depression that weighed upon his spirits. He was brave and daring almost to rashness, and the probability of his closing his career by a violent death had for him no terrors. Yet a mysterious sort of foreboding, such as he had never before experienced, hung over him. He felt that he was going to fight in a bad cause, that he was destined to bring misfortune upon every

Family that became connected with him; and certain superstitious sensations whispered to his troubled mind that the blood of the murdered and innocent Basilia called out for vengeance, and that some signal punishment was now going to fall upon him for a crime that had hitherto passed unheeded. He was at a loss to imagine how Mr. Shirley could possibly have become acquainted with his Secret; and the fact of his being so, added considerably to his disquietude.

He wrote a Letter to Lord Altamont, to be delivered to him in case of his death, in which he requested him to receive his Widow into his Family and to provide for her comfort;—and he also wrote to his Mother to beseech her to show every kindness to her Daughter-in-Law for his sake. He addressed a few hurried lines of farewell to Julia herself,—and having thus arranged all his worldly affairs, he endeavoured to compose himself to rest.

Colonel Algernon and Mr. Shirley arrived almost at the same moment at the appointed place of meeting. A cold salutation was exchanged between them,

but during the time that the Seconds were employed in measuring the ground, they neither of them seemed disposed to speak. When every thing was prepared, and they were about to take their places, Horace thus addressed their mutual Friends.

“ I beg you will understand that I came here against my natural inclination. Mr. Shirley conceives that I have injured him by marrying his Sister. It may be so; but no consideration should have induced me to lift my hand against a Person so nearly related to my Wife, if I had not yesterday received from him an insult which no Man of Honour, no Individual with the feelings of a Gentleman, could possibly submit to without degradation.”

“ I am very willing to acknowledge,” replied William, “ that you behaved with much more forbearance than I should have expected from my acquaintance with your character; but let me request that all ideas of courtesy may be at an end between us.—That you will look upon me as your implacable Foe, and point your Weapon with as deadly a resolution against *My* breast, as it is my intention to direct mine against yours.”

Horace made no answer, the signal was given, and they both fired with the most harmless effect.

The Seconds immediately came forward and endeavoured to accommodate the quarrel. Colonel Algernon did not appear at all averse to the proposal of a reconciliation. He said ‘that as he had given his Antagonist no provocation, he could not be expected to offer any overtures of a pacific nature; but that if Mr. Shirley was inclined to make him a proper apology, and to recal the offensive words he had uttered; he should be very ready to receive it, and to forget what had passed.’

William would not however listen for an instant to the idea of an amicable adjustment. He declared ‘that he came there to fight, not to beg pardon of his Antagonist; and that they must fire again.’

“I am not afraid,” he added in a sarcastic tone, “of taking my chance of standing within the range of Colonel Algernon’s Pistol;” and it was in a voice audible to Horace alone, that he concluded, “though I am very well aware that when it is his intention to bring down his Victim, he possesses the rare art of seldom missing his aim.”

Horace was roused to fury by this malicious and unjustifiable taunt.

“ By Heaven !” he exclaimed, “ the skill he boasts of shall not fail me now. I spared him once ; but this time ——”

Before he could finish the sentence, Mr. Shirley’s Ball whizzed past his head, and just grazed his hat without doing him any further injury.

His own fire was more truly directed ; William staggered, and fell !

Before the Surgeon who had accompanied them to the ground, had time to examine the extent of the mischief ; the wounded Man told his Second, as he attempted to raise him from the earth, that he knew from his feelings his hurt was mortal ; he therefore besought him to leave him to his fate, and think only of providing for his own safety.

But this was a proposition which his Friend had too much generosity to accede to.

When Colonel Algernon saw his unfortunate Antagonist fall, the rage which had animated him an instant before, gave place to an indescribable sensation of horror. He seemed almost rooted to the spot

where he stood, and scarcely heard Mr. Jerningham as he earnestly and repeatedly suggested to him the absolute necessity of their immediate flight.

At length he appeared to understand his representations, for he hastily replied,

“Pray urge me no more.—I much wish that you would take care of *Yourself*. It is of little consequence what becomes of a Wretch like me. *I* cannot leave this place till I have heard the Surgeon’s report.”

The Medical Man had by this time ascertained the nature of the wound, he came up to Colonel Algernon; and in answer to his enquiries, he merely shook his head, and advised him to leave the Country as speedily as he could.

On Horace’s impetuously declaring he did not understand inuendoes, and desiring him to speak more plainly; he told him “that since he wished to know the *truth*, it was his duty to inform him that Mr. Shirley might probably live a few hours, but that in his opinion it was impossible he could survive the day.”

Horace did not speak a word when he received this intelligence, but he looked as if he was going to faint; and he still lingered near the wounded Sufferer as if he was unable to depart without having obtained his forgiveness.

The Surgeon observed this; he had not concealed his danger from his Patient, and he now asked him if he was not willing to shake hands with Colonel Algernon?

Mr. Shirley started. “No,—Yes,—” exclaimed he, “I am ready to do any thing to get rid of his presence.”

The Surgeon beckoned to Horace, who instantly advanced, and bending over William, said in an almost inaudible voice, and with deep emotion; “that he hoped he would not refuse to pardon him for a Deed which must entail regret and misery of the bitterest description upon himself to the last day of his existence.”

“I own before all the world,” replied Mr. Shirley, “that I found you sufficiently reluctant to abridge the life I placed in your power; until I goaded you on to

do so by means which I knew to be irresistible. The blame in this business is *mine*, and *I* must pay the forfeit for it.—I grow faint, and cannot say more. Farewell. I beg that you will leave me.”

As Mr. Shirley could not have borne the motion of a Carriage, his Second and the Medical Man determined to carry him to the nearest Cottage.

He had requested that the Post Boy who had driven him to the place of Meeting, might be sent express to Captain Vernon; and a Note had accordingly been written to Arthur in pencil, briefly informing him of what had happened, and requiring him to repair to his unfortunate Cousin with all the despatch which so desperate a case demanded. William was extremely anxious that he should arrive before he expired, and his Friend promised to remain with him until Captain Vernon made his appearance.

Having heard all these arrangements concluded, and perceiving that he could be of no further assistance; Mr. Jerningham hurried Horace towards the carriage that was waiting for them, and desired the Driver to take them back to Dover.

“To Dover,” repeated his Companion, who seemed recalled to a new train of recollections by having caught the sound of that word. “My God, how shall I dare to meet Julia while the life-blood of her Brother is still warm and reeking upon my hands?”

“It is indeed a most unfortunate, a most lamentable business!” replied Mr. Jerningham. “But you have at least the consolation of knowing that the Duel was not one of your own seeking; that it was forced upon you; and that you could not, without compromising your honour, have acted in any other way than you have done.”

“True, true;” exclaimed Horace, “He rejected all my overtures with insulting disdain; he persisted in heaping upon me the most cutting and insufferable insults.—I have taken my revenge! But his death will destroy my happiness and completely ruin all my future prospects.”

“The first thing to be considered at present,” said Mr. Jerningham, who was anxious to divert him from dwelling upon these distressing reflections, and to awaken him to the necessity of exertion,—“is the

best means of getting you out of this Country before you can be arrested by the strong arm of the Law. We must both recross the Channel without an instant's delay. I imagine Mrs. Algernon will of course accompany you in your flight."

"Poor Thing," observed Horace, "I wish she was with my Mother at Altamont Castle; but I cannot send her there alone, and as I have no Friend here with whom I can possibly leave her,—there is no alternative;—she must certainly follow my desperate fortunes.—Yet the greatest difficulty still remains. How can I summon courage to break to her the calamity that I have brought upon her? I cannot, I feel that I cannot ever have the heart to do so."

"That must be my painful task," answered his Companion. "*You* are not just now in a state to undertake it, or to be capable of making the arrangements for our return to Calais."

And accordingly when they arrived within half a mile of Dover, Mr. Jerningham ordered the Post Boy to stop. He persuaded him to promise, on receiving a large bribe, that he would not mention a word of

what had taken place to any living Creature during the next twelve hours. And that if any questions were asked him when he reached home, he would merely say ‘ that the Gentlemen he had driven, had left the Chaise and preferred coming back on foot.’—

“ It is better we should walk the rest of our way,” said he to Horace. “ The return of an empty Hack Chaise will attract no attention; but if we were to drive up in it to the Inn door, we might probably subject ourselves to very inconvenient observation. I know a Person in the Town in whom I can safely confide, we will go in the first instance to his House and persuade him to settle every thing for us about our departure, our passage, &c. &c. &c. He is under some obligations to me, and I have little doubt of his agreeing to perform this kind office.”

Mr. Jerningham was not mistaken. He had no sooner briefly explained the state of the case, than his Friend engaged to manage all the requisite preliminaries, and to secure comfortable accommodations for the number of persons he named,—on board a Vessel that was expected to sail for the Coast of France in

about four hours.—He furnished Horace with writing materials, and while the wretched Young Man attempted to give Lord Altamont something like a connected account of his unfortunate Meeting with Mr. Shirley, and of the fatal consequences that had resulted from it; his Companion left him, and proceeded to the Inn to communicate to Julia the misery that awaited her.

She had been up a long time, and he found her in a state of the greatest anxiety and uneasiness at the protracted absence of her Husband. She looked eagerly towards the door as he entered the room, and exclaimed in a tone of disappointment,

“I thought it had been Colonel Algernon.—You are an early Visitor Mr. Jerningham.”

“And I am afraid not a welcome one,” replied he. “It is my misfortune to be the bearer of very unpleasant news.”

Julia turned extremely pale.

“That odious Creditor,” she said, “cannot surely have tormented Horace again? After every thing was so amicably accommodated between them last

night, he cannot have been so unreasonable as to molest him a second time? He has not dared to throw him into Prison?"

"I have not heard a word about any troublesome Creditor," answered Mr. Jerningham.

"But have you seen Horace?" interrupted Julia. "Can you tell me what is become of him?"

"I can indeed. Let me however entreat you to be more composed, and to arm yourself with resolution to bear the melancholy and afflicting intelligence am come to unfold."

"Speak it quickly," cried Julia in great agitation. "Conceal no circumstance from me. I wish to know the worst, and to know it immediately. I am not, I assure you, unprepared for bad news. Horace contrived to quiet my suspicions, by telling me a plausible Story about a debt,—but he could not quite deceive me; I discovered that he had been more violently distressed than it was natural he would have been by such an occurrence. In short I read *that* in his countenance which foreboded something dreadful. And no words can describe the misery of the suspense and apprehension I have this morning endured."

“I will not prolong that suspense,” replied Mr. Jerningham. “Yet, alas! I fear you will find that the anticipation of evil was less agonizing than the reality. By a most unhappy chance, Colonel Algernon met Mr. Shirley in the Street yesterday evening, and they were so close to each other that it was impossible they could pass without some signs of recognition.”

Julia started violently. “Could my Brother be at Dover yesterday?” she exclaimed.—“But pray go on.”

“On the part of Colonel Algernon the greeting was highly conciliatory, but it was returned by Mr. Shirley not merely with coldness, but with the most contemptuous indignation.”

“I hope,” said Julia, and the colour came back to her cheek as she spoke, “that Horace did not demean himself by making any concessions to William, when he chose to treat him in the insolent manner you describe.”

“My Friend behaved, I believe,” continued Mr. Jerningham, “with admirable calmness and modera-

tion. I grieve to say that Mr. Shirley did not scruple to assail him with insults which no Gentleman could tamely submit to, and finally he obliged him to accept a Challenge to meet him in the Field at an early hour this morning."

"You need not tell me the rest;" cried Julia in an agony of despair. "I know, I know it all. Horace is killed! My cruel, my unnatural Brother has murdered him!"

And she wrung her hands and wildly tore her hair in the bitterness of her distress,—as she exclaimed at broken intervals; "It is I who have been the cause of all this.—Oh where shall I be able to hide my guilty head?—I have deserted my own Relations, and now that Horace, my beloved Horace is gone, I have not a Friend left in the world to take pity upon me in my misery!"

Her screams were so loud and so piercing, that they brought the Landlady and the Waiter into the room in great alarm, to enquire what had happened to her?

Mr. Jerningham quietly told them ' that the Lady

had just heard unexpectedly of the death of a near Relation, and that the distressing intelligence had brought on a violent paroxysm of an hysterical affection to which she was constitutionally subject.' He said he had no doubt she would soon be better, and he begged them to retire, and to send her a glass of cold water, (which was the only thing she could take upon these occasions,) by her own Maid.—He had hitherto purposely allowed Julia to entertain the erroneous belief of her Husband's death;—and when her Maid appeared with the glass of water, he took it from her hands, and desired her to have all her Mistress's things in readiness for her immediate departure.

“Where are you going to take me?” asked Julia, who had partly overheard this direction.

“Will you not let me see him?” added she more wildly.—“I must,—I will look upon him once again. You cannot surely wish to deny me the wretched satisfaction of beholding his mangled Remains!”

“You shall certainly see Colonel Algernon,” said Mr. Jerningham, soothingly, “And in very different circumstances from what you expect. I have never told you that he was not alive.”

“This is too barbarous!” exclaimed Julia. “You will drive me mad, if you mock me thus with false hopes.”—

Then hastily catching at another idea, she enquired eagerly,

“Can it be possible that Horace still breathes? Your face confesses it!—If indeed he does: Oh lead me to him this instant; it may not yet be too late. Why did you not undeceive me sooner? It was inhuman to waste so much precious time.”

“Horace,” answered Mr. Jerningham, endeavouring to restrain her impetuosity, “Is not only alive, he is unhurt, and will be here presently to assure you of this truth himself. I grieve to add, however, that Mr. Shirley has not made an equally fortunate escape.”

The scream of hysterical joy which had burst from Julia’s lips on hearing of her Husband’s safety, was suddenly hushed when she learnt her Brother’s dreadful fate. The violent emotion which had almost convulsed her features a few moments before, was immediately succeeded by an expression of calm and indescribable horror; and her passionate and agonizing grief, seemed at once changed to mute and

hopeless despair. So paralysing was the effect of this last blow, that it appeared for some time to have deprived her both of feeling and consciousness.

At length she asked in a low hollow voice, and without raising her eyes, “if her Brother was dead?”

Mr. Jerningham informed her ‘that he had not expired when he left him, but that his case was quite hopeless, and that he had little doubt all must now be over.’

“Poor William!” said Julia, in a tone which went to her Companion’s heart.—“My Father too, and Emily!—Oh miserable, wicked Creature that I am. I am at once unfit to live or to die. Would that the Earth could open this instant beneath my feet, and close again and swallow me up for ever!”

After this burst of remorse and anguish, she relapsed into silence. She shed no tear, she took no notice of any thing around her, but remained fixed and motionless as a Statue. Mr. Jerningham endeavoured in vain to rouse her from this fearful torpor. He attempted by turns to soothe, to comfort, and to argue with her. She scarcely seemed to hear, and

she certainly paid no attention to one word that he said. He began to entertain fears for her reason, and he determined to try what effect the sight of her Husband might produce, in restoring her to a less unnatural state of mind.

He recalled her Maid, and desiring her not to disturb her Mistress or pretend to take any particular notice of her; but upon no account to leave her till he and Colonel Algernon returned: He went back to Horace, who was anxiously and impatiently awaiting the result of his Mission.

He gave him a short relation of what had passed, and without allowing him an instant's reflection, he hurried him away to the Inn, dragging him along almost by force. When they arrived at the door of the apartment where Julia was, Mr. Jerningham beckoned to the Maid; and pushing Horace into the room, left the unhappy Pair alone together.

Mrs. Algernon was still sitting absorbed in her grief, and looking the mute picture of hopeless woe she has been already described. Horace gazed upon her with agony and dismay.

“ Julia,” said he at length in an imploring tone, “ Julia, can you ever forgive me ?”

At the sound of his voice she started, looked up and fixing her eyes for a moment upon the sorrow-stricken countenance of him whom she had so short a time before lamented as dead,—she burst into a violent flood of tears; and rising from her seat, as he advanced towards her, she rushed into his arms.

The morning was wearing rapidly away, and Horace was explaining to his Wife that after the calamity which had fallen upon him, it was unsafe for him to stay an hour longer in England; when she happened to cast her eye upon the sleeve of his coat. Unperceived by himself or by any one who had been with him, it retained the mark of a spot of blood. Julia caught a glance of the fatal stain, and starting wildly from him,—her first paroxysms of horror and distress returned with redoubled violence.

It would be painful to dwell upon the dreadful continuation of such a Scene. Neither Horace nor Mr. Jerningham could succeed in calming the transports of her despair, and it was only by working upon

her fears for the security of the former, that they contrived to persuade her to accompany them on board the Vessel that was to convey them to France.

They got away just in time. Julia's extraordinary behaviour, and Colonel Algernon's agitated appearance, had given rise to strange surmises amongst the Inhabitants of the Inn. And although the Post Boy who had driven Horace and his Friend to and from the place of Meeting, had not betrayed the trust reposed in him;—Various Rumours began to be circulated and believed at Dover, of a Duel having been fought a few miles from that Town which had terminated fatally to one of the Parties concerned.

In the course of the day the intelligence of this affair was fully and circumstantially received, and Persons empowered to apprehend Colonel Algernon and his Second for the offence they had committed, arrived in pursuit of them; but before they made their appearance, the Fugitives had sailed for the Continent.

CHAP. XXXII.

“ Speak not to me of shrift or prayer !

“ Short space, few words, are mine to spare ;

“ Forgive and listen.” — — —

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

THE place to which Mr. Shirley was conveyed was a small Farm House where he received every kindness and attention that it was in the power of the Inhabitants to bestow, but where he was of course destitute of many of the comforts and alleviations which a Person in his circumstances required. He was put into a clean and homely bed, in a little room not generally occupied by the Family ; his Medical Attendant took his station by his side, while his Friend was too much agitated to remain fixed in any one position.

William suffered far more from anguish of mind than from actual bodily pain, and this brought on a sort of irritation which was extremely distressing,

and which encreased in the same proportion as his strength became exhausted. He had calculated the probable period that must elapse before his Cousin's arrival, and he looked forward to that moment with a feverish impatience—which it is easier to imagine than to describe. He was afraid that if any thing occurred to delay Arthur, he might not come in time to find him alive; and he had many reasons to be peculiarly anxious to see him. To so near and so valued a Relation, he felt that he could freely unburthen his mind. He had prepared no written communication of any sort for his Father; and he was extremely desirous that his Cousin should undertake the arduous and delicate commission of conveying his last farewell to his Family,—and of informing them of all the melancholy particulars of his death.

Captain Vernon was inexpressibly shocked at receiving the intelligence of the fatal event which had just taken place; and he did not lose a moment in preparing to obey the summons of his unfortunate Relation. He had no difficulty in getting permission to fly immediately to attend Mr. Shirley during his

last agonies ; and as it occurred to him that it would probably fall to his lot to be the Bearer of the calamitous tidings of what had happened, to his Uncle ; he also obtained a conditional leave of absence to enable him to proceed without delay into Devonshire, should he find it expedient or necessary for him to do so.

Arthur gave directions to his Servant and to the Post Boy to follow him,—and then galloped with such desperate speed towards the spot where the latter had explained to him that the wounded Man was to be carried,—that he reached his destination much sooner than might have been hoped, even by those who were so eagerly expecting him. As he was well acquainted with that part of the Country, he easily found the Farm House, and was met at the door by Mr. Shirley's Friend who had heard the rapid approach of a Horseman, and had gone down stairs to reconnoitre and receive him.

A few words of question and reply, confirmed Arthur's worst fears, and he hurried to the bed side of his Cousin, who had likewise caught the sound of an arrival and was agonized with impatience to see him.

The meeting between them under such circumstances, was extremely affecting. William was the first who recovered his composure, and turning to his Second, he told him ‘that as Captain Vernon was now come to take care of him, he should really be distressed if he remained with him longer.’

“It is painful to me,” he continued, addressing the Surgeon, “to endanger the safety of any one. I am persuaded that no Medical skill can be of further service to me. You will therefore oblige me, if you will leave me.—I am deeply grateful to you both for the disinterested kindness you have already shown me.”

It was not without sincere regret that his Friend agreed to the expediency of an immediate departure, but none of William’s arguments could prevail upon the Medical Man to accompany him ; as he said ‘it was impossible to know what change might take place in his Patient, or how far his professional aid might be required, in the course of the next few hours.’—He retired however into another room, as it was evident that Mr. Shirley wished to have some confidential conversation with his Cousin.

William detailed minutely every circumstance that had preceded the Duel, and recounted all that had passed upon the ground; without attempting in the slightest degree to palliate the violence of his own conduct, or to throw any unmerited blame upon that of Horace Algernon. He said ‘he was convinced that it was the accidental knowledge of a fatal secret, which alone, had empowered him to urge on his reluctant Antagonist to the Act of vengeance which had been committed.’

Arthur endeavoured to calm the agitation of his spirits, to soothe him into a more charitable and christian frame of mind, and thus insensibly to lead him to prepare himself for that World towards which it was evident he was rapidly hastening.

But William suddenly broke off the thread of his observations, by exclaiming impatiently,

“Do not talk to me in that way. I know that I have been a grievous Sinner. But the few short moments that remain to me, are gliding fast into eternity. It is now too late to repent.”

Arthur ventured gently to hint ‘that we are

taught to hope that when it is sincere, no repentance however late—will prove entirely unavailing.’

“ I sent for You,” replied William, fiercely, “ to comfort me, not to torment me before my time. If I could live my life over again, I think,—I believe that I should act in every respect very differently from what I have done. Yet I cannot by a single pang of vain remorse, at once transform myself from a Sceptical Sinner to a Saint. I must not hope that any thing short of a miracle, can enable me in an instant to obtain a complete mastery over those evil passions which have acquired fearful strength during long years of uncontrouled indulgence.—I feel, I feel that I am under their dominion now. Hatred, revenge, and fury, still distract my brain, and keep out better thoughts. It would be worse than hypocrisy in a guilty Wretch in such a state as I am, to dare to speak of a contrition I know too certainly I never can experience.”

Arthur was both silenced and horrified by this shocking confession. He saw that if he pressed his point further he should only render his unhappy

Cousin's feelings more desperate,—and by aggravating his mental excitement, perhaps anticipate the total failure of that bodily strength which seemed already to be rapidly deserting him.

After a distressing pause of some duration, he therefore merely asked William,

“ If there was any thing he wished him to do for him? Any directions,—any message he desired him to convey to any one ?”

“ As soon as all is over,” replied Mr. Shirley, “ I hope you will go to my Father. I need not request you to be a comforter to Him and Emily under the affliction I have brought upon them. Alas, if they knew me as I know myself, they would have little reason to lament my loss! They would rather rejoice that I did not live long enough to be exposed to public infamy and dishonour; and thus to involve every body connected with me in shame, disgrace, and misery.”

Arthur imagined that his Cousin's senses began to wander, and he made no effort to interrupt him as he continued,—

“ Upon my own account I can have no desire to drag on an existence which disappointment of the bitterest description, in the first instance rendered indifferent to me; and which became hateful from the instant I forfeited my self-respect. Had Adelaide Fauconberg returned my affection, it would have been far otherwise! It was that fatal attachment which blighted all my prospects of happiness, and occasioned the ruin and despair that are my portion now.”

“ You may at least,” said Captain Vernon in a soothing tone, “ indulge the melancholy satisfaction of believing that She who could not love you in life, will not fail hereafter to recollect you with feelings of pity, tenderness, and regret.”

“ No, no,” exclaimed William, wildly, “ she will detest my memory. She has too much cause to do so.—My death will be a subject of great relief to her. *I* have hitherto formed the only impediment which has successfully opposed her Union with Henry Algernon,—the Man she adores.—Their Marriage will now take place whenever he returns to

England; and the assurance that Adelaide will at length become the Wife of my brilliant, my detested Rival,—is the poisoned Shaft which agonizes me a thousand times more keenly than all the other dreadful reflections which have conspired to torment and distract me during the last few hours.”

His countenance was fearfully convulsed for some minutes after he concluded these words. Arthur was so petrified with what he had heard, that he was quite unable to speak; and he stood gazing upon the miserable Victim of ungoverned passion who lay extended before him; and expecting that every struggle he witnessed would terminate his earthly sufferings.

By degrees however William became more tranquil, and signing to his Cousin to take the vacant seat by his bed side which the Surgeon had originally occupied; he told him ‘that he thought he should feel easier if he communicated to him a Secret which had long weighed heavily upon his conscience; and which it was not impossible he might eventually learn through some other channel. In short that painful as the effort would be, he had determined to

disclose it to him,—even at the risk of forfeiting his esteem and degrading himself in his good opinion for ever.’ And then without waiting to hear Arthur’s assurances of sympathy and indulgence, he gave him a hurried account of the progress of his passion for Adelaide, of the treacherous encouragement he had received from her Mother, and the determined rejection he had met with from herself. He scarcely trusted himself to speak upon the despair he felt when he witnessed the happiness of his Rival ; and he was much agitated when he entered upon the disgraceful History to which his other details had only formed the Preface,—and related with unflinching accuracy, every particular of the degrading transaction which had followed his interview with Woodgate ; and explained all the consequences which had resulted from the scheme of Villany he had adopted.

“ From the moment,” he concluded, “ when I leagued myself in dishonour with such an Associate, I subjected myself to endure continual shame, vexation, and misery. And the Deed of Darkness which destroyed my peace, and embittered the remaining

portion of my life, has now also been the occasion of plunging me with all my Sins upon my head, into a bloody and untimely grave."

"My dear William," said Arthur, affectionately pressing his Cousin's hand, "far be it from me to censure you too severely for having acted in the manner you now so justly deplore. If you have deeply erred, you have likewise been signally punished; and we must not forget that when you first gave way to the temptation that beset you, your passions had been violently agitated, and you were still under the influence of extraordinary and powerful excitement."

"True, true: there was indeed that excuse," exclaimed Mr. Shirley eagerly. Then suddenly changing his tone, he continued in a subdued and melancholy voice, "yet this is no hour to encourage self-delusion. The baseness of my conduct appears before me in all its naked deformity; and Oh, I begin to feel the folly and wickedness of those sceptical doubts which unsettled my principles, and prepared the way for my ruin and destruction here, and the eternal misery of my wretched Soul hereafter."

As he finished these words he sunk back upon his pillow, apparently exhausted with the exertion he had made in speaking so long, and upon such agitating subjects. Arthur could scarcely conceal the anguish of his own feelings, but he perceived that his Cousin was not in a state to be sensible of what was passing around him. And as he thought he seemed to require Medical aid, he recalled the Surgeon from the adjoining room.

Several hours elapsed before William ceased to breathe. At times he talked incoherently, and at other intervals he broke out into the wildest ravings of despair. Once only he appeared to be aware of what he was saying ; he had been looking calmly at his Cousin, and at length he drew him towards him, and whispered with a smile,

“ Arthur *You* will prove a greater comfort to my Father than ever *I* should have been. He already loves you as if you were his Son.—You need not start at my making use of that term ;—a deficiency of fortune was the only consideration which deterred him from sanctioning an Union, otherwise calculated to

ensure the happiness of the two Persons dearest to him in the world. When Emily becomes the Heiress of Greyfield, that impediment will be removed; and without possessing the Prophetic Talent with which those in my present circumstances, are said sometimes to be gifted,—it is easy for me to foresee that your mutual constancy will at no distant period be rewarded as it so well deserves.—It is strange that my death should smooth away the secret sorrows of almost all those whose welfare has interested me most deeply during my life!”

Arthur was too much affected to be able to utter a single syllable in reply, but his tears fell fast upon the Sufferer's hand, and before he could recover himself the brief gleam of consciousness and recollection which had come over William's mind, had again entirely deserted him. The kindness and consideration he had shown towards his Cousin, left however an impression that did not pass so rapidly away. Long afterwards did Arthur recal with no ordinary emotion, the sentences he had spoken at that moment, and retrace in imagination the very look and gesture that had accompanied them.

As soon as Mr. Shirley's mortal agonies were over, Captain Vernon felt the necessity of exerting himself instead of giving way to unavailing grief.

After a short consultation with the Surgeon, he sent for his own Servant,—a trusty Man who had lived with him some years; explained to him the reason that called for his immediate departure, and gave him the orders and directions he required him to attend to during his absence. He then hired a Horse of the Farmer, and rode on to Dover, where he had various arrangements to make before he could set out upon his Journey to Devonshire.

During the short time he remained at that place he ascertained that Colonel Algernon and Julia had actually re-embarked for the Continent,—a piece of information which afforded him much relief.

His measures were judiciously planned, and as promptly carried into execution: and it was not until after he was fairly shut up in the Post Chaise which was to convey him to his Uncle, that he found leisure to indulge those melancholy and heart-rending reflections which the dreadful fate of his Cousin too painfully suggested. He threw himself back in the

Carriage, and covering his face with his hands, gave free vent to the bitter and distressing feelings which had hitherto been with so much difficulty restrained.

Arthur's journey appeared to him to be interminable, and yet as he drew nearer its conclusion he began to look forward with indescribable dread to the moment of his arrival at the place of his destination. He wished it might be possible for him to have an interview with his Father before any of the rest of the Family were aware of his visit; as he thought that Mr. Vernon might be able to prepare Sir William and Emily to learn by degrees the fearful calamity that had befallen them,—and thus mitigate the shock they must experience if they heard it too suddenly.

It was late in the afternoon when he came in sight of the Abode that contained his Relations; he grew violently agitated, and having desired the Post Boy not to drive up to the door, he got out of the Chaise as it turned into the approach,—and determined that while it was proceeding towards the Stable Yard, he would himself enter the House through the Offices.

While making the requisite *détour* to accomplish

this purpose, the perversity of his fate led him to stumble upon the two Persons whom in his present circumstances he felt the most anxious to avoid : in turning the sharp angle of a plantation path, he met his Mother and Emily. They were coming home from a walk, Mrs. Vernon was leaning upon her Niece's arm,—and as the latter raised her eyes to observe some object her Companion had pointed out to her ; Arthur remarked that his Cousin's countenance was become paler and more thoughtful than it had formerly been. Her beauty, however, seemed to him far from diminished by this alteration in its character, and he fancied he had never before seen her look half so interesting and lovely.

All this was the reflection of an instant, for Mrs. Vernon had recognised her Son, and she had scarcely time to utter an exclamation of surprise before he was folded in her arms.

“ My dear Arthur,” said she, endeavouring to compose her fluttered spirits, “ I am still almost unable to credit the evidence of my own senses, and to believe that you are really here. It must be some-

thing very extraordinary and important that has brought you so unexpectedly to visit us. Your appearance too," she continued examining him more attentively ; " is fearfully wild and haggard,—You tremble from head to foot!—Arthur, Arthur it absolutely shocks me to look at you.—Why do you not speak? You are ill, or unhappy, or both."

" You know me so well," answered Arthur, in a melancholy tone, " that it would be useless, even if I had the desire to do so, to attempt to deny that it was no trivial cause that induced me to come into Devonshire; and it would be equally vain if I pretended to conceal from you that my errand is of a peculiarly painful nature.—But before I disclose it to you more fully, I believe it will be far better for me to talk it over with my Father."

" At any rate you may tell me, may you not?" enquired Mrs. Vernon, very anxiously, " Who is the Person this alarming mystery principally concerns."

" Alas !" replied Arthur, " it very deeply concerns us all."

" Answer me one question more," exclaimed his

Mother in a faltering voice, “ And my interrogations will be at an end.—Have you heard any bad news of your Brother who is at Sea ?”

“ I have not heard of him at all very lately, and I am always inclined to trust that no news is good news.”

“ Heaven be praised !” ejaculated Mrs. Vernon fervently. “ His Profession is a dangerous one, and I could not help fearing that you might have received some disastrous tidings of him :—that he might have fallen a Victim to those perils to which a Sailor’s life is constantly exposed.”

Emily had all this time shrunk back a little space apart from her Aunt, as if she deemed that *her* presence was not required during the first moments of her Meeting with Arthur ; and perhaps also she was desirous of screening from observation the violence of that emotion she found it impossible to controul.

When her Cousin turned, however, and gently disengaged himself from his Mother, to advance towards her ; she came forward with as much apparent firmness as she could contrive to command, and welcomed him upon his arrival.

Arthur was nearly overset by this, and could scarcely find voice to reply, "that grateful as he was to her for the kindness of her expressions, they pierced him to the heart; since he had the misfortune to feel himself an ominous Guest, and to wish himself any where but in his actual situation, and under his present circumstances."

Poor Emily could not become paler than she had been before, but the tears rose to her eyes as she heard these words; and Mrs. Vernon who appreciated the awkwardness of her position, and remarked that the mutual restraint which she and Arthur felt in each other's presence, was growing more and more distressing to them both; proposed that they should all proceed immediately to the House.

Captain Vernon drew his Mother's arm within one of his, and timidly offered the other to Emily, but she declined it,—saying with an air of embarrassment, "that she would follow them almost directly.—She expected her Father every moment to return from his ride, and she would only wait out of doors to waylay him, and tell him *who* had unexpectedly arrived to visit them."

“No, no!” cried Arthur, eagerly, and almost thrown off his guard, “let me entreat you not to stay for my Uncle. Not to think of telling him so hastily that I am here.”

Emily looked at her Cousin with much surprise, as she replied,

“You speak incomprehensibly, and until you are at liberty to reveal the fearful mystery that hangs over you, I will not even try to understand your meaning. As I am unacquainted with your secret however, I trust you will not think me very obstinate and ungracious if I persist in fulfilling my original intention of intercepting my Father and simply informing him of the addition he will find in our Party.”

“*You* never can be either obstinate or ungracious,” said Arthur, “but”——

“It is not fair to set her the example,” interrupted Mrs. Vernon, as she hurried her Son away, in defiance of his visible reluctance to leave his Cousin. As soon as they were out of Emily’s hearing, he observed, “Poor Thing! I had not the courage to tell her that I was sent here by her Brother; or to break to her that he is dangerously ill.”

“If that is the case,” answered Mrs. Vernon, “Why do you not seek the earliest opportunity of communicating your intelligence to your Uncle? Not an instant ought to be lost.”

“I wish to prepare him gradually to expect the sad affliction which I am afraid awaits him; and in William’s present situation, I believe that the delay of a few hours can make no possible difference.”

Mrs. Vernon began indistinctly to suspect that her Nephew’s death had already taken place.

“This blow,” she said, “will fall heavily indeed upon my poor Brother! It comes too before he has yet had time to recover the keenly distressing shock of Julia’s Elopement and undutiful conduct.”

While Arthur was shut up with his Father, Mrs. Vernon explained her apprehensions to Louisa and Emily, and they were soon fully confirmed to her by her Husband; but although he informed her of Mr. Shirley’s fate, it was many days before she was made aware of the accumulated horrors that had attended it.

It would be vain to describe the anguish Sir William Shirley and Emily suffered under an affliction,

which considered in every point of view, appeared to them to be almost unparalleled in bitterness. The Baronet was at first quite frantic, but the kindness of his excellent and judicious Relations, and above all the gentle and affectionate attentions of his Daughter, (who seemed to forget her own grief in her anxious solicitude to soften his,)—at length restored him to a state of comparative calmness and composure. He even expressed a parental desire to know what was become of the unhappy Julia, and to learn how she had borne the dreadful weight of misery she had brought down upon herself and all her Family?

Arthur staid only one day in Devonshire. He pleaded the necessity of his immediate return to his Quarters to obtain an extension of Leave, as he had offered to undertake and superintend all the arrangements preparatory to his Cousin's Funeral.

Sir William wished his Son to be interred amongst his Ancestors at Greyfield, and determined to attend the last sad Ceremony in person; but Mr. Vernon, who proposed to accompany him upon that melancholy occasion,—persuaded him only to go down into the

North just time enough to join the Funeral Procession during the last Stage of its long Journey.—

He made no endeavour to induce him to give up his intention altogether,—for painful and distressing as he was aware such a trial must prove to him ; he justly thought that after it was once over, he might feel a degree of satisfaction in reflecting that he had not shrunk from going through it.

CHAP. XXXIII.

“ O Alice Brand, my native Land
“ Is lost for love of you ;
“ And we must hold by wood and wold,
“ As Outlaws wont to do.

“ O Alice, 'twas all for thy locks so bright,
“ And 'twas for thine eyes so blue,
“ That on the night of our luckless flight,
“ Thy Brother bold I slew.”

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

Prospero. “ — As my gift, and thine own acquisition
“ Worthily purchas'd, take my Child ; — — — ”

SHAKSPEARE.

ADELAIDE FAUCONBERG was very much overcome when she heard of the death of Mr. Shirley. Under any circumstances she would have been extremely sorry to learn that he had been so suddenly cut off from the world, but there was something peculiarly horrible in the idea of his having fallen by the hand of his Brother-in-Law. Perhaps too, when she considered that that Brother-in-Law was Colonel Alger-

non, she was even more affected than she would otherwise have been ; it seemed to her imagination that this shocking Event was strikingly and mysteriously connected with her own concerns ; and that the fatal History of Donna Basilia de Lerma, which William had taken so much pains to investigate for the unworthy purpose of slandering Henry Algernon's character, had been the secret cause of the immoderate indignation he had expressed when his Sister's Marriage became known to him,—and also of the unrelenting vengeance with which he had pursued Horace afterwards.

She was too well aware that Mr. Shirley was devoid of principle himself ; and she could not therefore believe that he could be very deeply grieved by that deficiency in another,—or that it was any thing in Colonel Algernon's general character, (indifferent as that was,) or in his own slight previous acquaintance with him,—that could have rendered him so particularly an object of his hatred.

‘ No, no ;’ fancied she, ‘ he had long taught himself to look upon him as the Murderer of his first

Wife, and it was natural enough that he could not endure the thought of Julia's having united herself to a Person whose hand was stained with the guilt of so dreadful a crime. Alas, when we allow ourselves to deviate from the right path, how difficult do we find it to retrace our steps; and when we are tempted to commit one fault how little do we foresee into how many others it may lead us, or how dreadful may be the punishment we are preparing to draw down upon our own heads!

This had been too fearfully verified in the speedy and remarkable retribution which had followed Julia Algernon's undutiful behaviour. Adelaide had been very sincerely concerned when she received the intelligence of her flight, and had grieved for the distress she was sure it must occasion both Emily and Sir William; but her deepest pity was now transferred from them, to the unhappy Author of their complicated misery,—and she could not bear even to think what must be the hopeless wretchedness of her present feelings and reflections.

Adelaide's own strength had been considerably

improved ; Sir George and Lady Fauconberg talked of removing to London, and she was looking forward with much satisfaction to the prospect of meeting her Friend Emily there,—when the melancholy tidings of Mr. Shirley's fate were conveyed to the North. Her nerves had previously been so shattered in various ways, that her health was for a time much affected by the shock it gave her,—and her Mother consequently proposed that they should all remain in the Country a little while longer than they had intended.

As soon as Sir George Fauconberg learnt that Mr. Shirley was to be buried at Greyfield, and that his Father was to come down upon that occasion ; he hesitated upon the propriety of his offering, (through William Vernon,) to join the melancholy Procession ; and perhaps it was the consciousness of the secret injury he had sustained from William, which at last decided him to do so.

Many painful recollections induced Sir William to wish to decline meeting his Neighbour during so trying a scene, yet he felt the kindness of the proposal, and he accepted it the more readily because it was a

mark of respect to his Memory which he was sure would have been gratifying to his Son could he have been himself aware of it.

Colonel Algernon in his hurried Letter to Lord Altamont, had earnestly requested him to write to him at Paris; thither it was his intention immediately to proceed,—and until his Grandfather's answer reached him, he felt that he could not arrange any plans for the future.—Indeed he was still in such a state of agitation, that he was unable to think collectedly upon any subject.

Julia had scarcely spoken, and had taken little notice of any thing during the passage; but after they landed at Calais she became so alarmingly ill, that it was quite impossible to attempt carrying her further. Remorse and horror had been preying upon her mind until her senses had become completely deranged, and when her Husband tried to talk to her and to soothe her, her only answers were the ravings of a Maniac.

Horace was unwilling to call in the assistance of Strangers or to allow any one but himself to witness

her sufferings, but the violence of her disorder increased so rapidly that he was at length obliged to seek the aid of Medical Advice.

Mr. Jerningham had fortunately discovered that there was an English Physician at that moment at the same Inn as themselves; he was a Young Man who had been travelling with a Family of Distinction, and as they were to remain some little time at Paris, his Services were no longer required, and he had left them to return home.

Mr. Jerningham immediately introduced himself to his Countryman; he found he had already heard from the Waiter, ‘ that a poor English Lady had been attacked by a sudden fit of insanity, and was shut up in a room apart from the other Strangers, where she was tearing her hair and uttering shrieks and cries that were doleful and terrible to listen to.’

A few words of explanation, gave the Medical Man a clearer idea of Julia’s Malady than all the Frenchman’s high-flown descriptions, and he requested to be conducted to her apartment without loss of time.

He found her in such a state of phrensy that it was

necessary to subject her to restraint, but he hoped that by bleeding her severely and cutting off her hair, he might be able to reduce the fever upon her brain, and restore her to herself. He patiently watched the effect of his remedies during the whole night, and it was probably to his skill and attention that she was principally indebted for the preservation of her life, as she certainly was for the return of her reason.

It was a painful and distressing task for Horace to sit hour after hour, and hear her in the presence of a third person, speak of things which related solely to their own private concerns, or which he had good reason to wish particularly to keep concealed. Yet if he attempted to move for an instant from her bed side, her agitation was excessive; she seemed impressed with an idea that he intended to desert her, and that if he once left her he never would return.

Sometimes in her delirium she called for her Brother, and talked to him as if she imagined him to be still alive; retracing in her conversation, many little circumstances which had endeared them to each other in their childish days.—Then she suddenly started off

into another strain, and deplored his death in the wildest accents of despair ; accusing herself of having been his Murderess.—

She raved about her Father,—her Sister ;—eulogised their kindness to her, and condemned herself as an undutiful Daughter, a Monster of ingratitude !—In short though she did not utter one word of censure against her Husband ; her bitter lamentations, as well as many of the truths she unconsciously forced upon him, pierced like daggers to his heart.

Towards morning a Crisis seemed to take place in her Complaint. After many minutes of encreased wildness and desperation, she gradually became more composed ; by slow degrees the wandering of her mind grew less perceptible, her recollection began to come back to her, and at last she appeared to be like a Person who has just wakened from a fearful dream.

The Physician remained at Calais for more than a week, as Horace had little difficulty in persuading him not to leave his Patient as long as he considered that there was any danger of her having a relapse of the Malady upon her brain. He had gained an

ascendancy over her too, which was happily exerted in endeavouring to reconcile her to her situation; and she made him promise that when he returned to England, he would enquire how her Family had borne their affliction, and send her any tidings he might be able to procure of them.

As it was essentially necessary that Julia should be kept perfectly quiet, it had now become out of the question to think of removing her to Paris, and Horace discovered a retired little Chateau where he decided that they should establish themselves for the present.

He had written again to Lord Altamont, a few days after he arrived in France, and in due course of time he received an answer from his Grandfather, in which he told him, ‘that deeply as he had himself been distressed by the afflicting information contained in both his Letters, he should forbear to aggravate the evils of his fate by useless reproaches;—since his violent and unjustifiable conduct had brought with it its own punishment, and had rendered both him and his unhappy Wife, the objects of his sincere commiseration.’

He said, ‘that as circumstances would now probably induce them to continue Abroad,—at least for some time; he should make immediate arrangements to settle upon them such an allowance as would enable them to live comfortably but not expensively;’ and he added ‘that the sum he intended to allot to them should be transmitted to them regularly every half year.’—He expressed many good wishes for the restoration of Mrs. Algernon’s health, and requested to hear again from Horace whenever his future movements might be decided.

This Letter was perhaps even a kinder and more indulgent one than Colonel Algernon had any right to expect, yet he was grievously disappointed with it; or more properly speaking, it opened his eyes to his actual situation, and showed the dreary change that had overclouded all his prospects.

It has been already observed that he had grown tired of a wandering existence, and that he had latterly began to look forward with complacency to the comfort and respectability that might be hoped for in an establishment in his native Country; not to mention the brighter perspective that sometimes rose

before his imagination, when he recollected that in the course of a very few years, he must inevitably be the Successor to an Ancient Title and a rich Inheritance.

His unfortunate Duel with Mr. Shirley, had at once destroyed these agreeable Visions. He was again reduced to the condition of an Emigrant, almost of an Outlaw. His means would be too limited to permit him to indulge his favorite passion for Play, or to enter into any expensive amusements; and to complete his distress and mortification, the Wife to whom his fate was indissolubly united, was no longer the lively, entertaining Companion he had formerly found her; but a melancholy, broken-hearted Invalid whom he could only regard with feelings of compassion and regret.

Julia had not failed to observe with deep concern the effect which Lord Altamont's Letter had produced upon her Husband's mind; and though she did not venture to remark it to him, she probably suspected what must be the nature of his present sentiments towards herself. Upon that point she was peculiarly

sensitive, and as-quick-sighted as ever; but in other respects she was much altered. Her mind had been so much shaken by the sudden and appalling calamity which had burst like a thunderbolt upon her,—that although her intellect was apparently restored, it never entirely recovered the shock it had then received. She became subject to long fits of gloom and melancholy, and in the intervals between these—her manner was often singularly wild and flighty. The keen wit, and acuteness of perception which had first captivated Horace's fancy, had entirely forsaken her, or only visited her by unequal starts; and in general gave place to a sort of childishness and inquietude of Spirit, which were alike wearing to herself and tiresome to her Friends.

Julia had heard from the Physician who had attended her at Calais, that Captain Vernon had been summoned to comfort her Brother during his last moments: and that he had afterwards gone into Devonshire to break to his Family the intelligence of what had happened.

She did not venture to communicate to her Hus-

band the intense anxiety she felt to learn how her Relations had borne the afflicting news. She dared not write to her Father,—and she knew not how to address herself even to Emily ; but she determined to appeal to Arthur's kindness, and to request him to take pity upon her misery, and to send her the information she was so desirous to obtain.

He was sincerely touched when he received his Cousin's Letter, and he lost no time in attempting to satisfy her natural curiosity, and in endeavouring to do so in a manner best calculated to give her all the consolation in his power. He told her ' that both Sir William and her Sister were quite as well as their Friends could expect them to be. That they had of course abandoned their intention of going to London in the Spring : and that they had promised they would, when they left Devonshire, accompany his Father and Mother to their Home.' He said ' he suspected that the whole Party would remove from thence to Greyfield later in the year, but that that point was not finally settled,—and at all events his own Family could only pay a short visit to the North as it

would not be prudent for his Mother to remain there after the warm weather was over.'—He assured Julia that her Father, far from feeling inexorable resentment towards her, had been softened by her misfortunes, and had frequently spoken of her with interest and compassion. And he earnestly recommended her to write him a penitent Letter; as he said 'he thought if she were to implore his forgiveness, Sir William would not now be disinclined to grant it to her.' He concluded, by reminding her 'that if she took his advice, she would be sure of having in her Sister, a kind and powerful Advocate to plead her Cause with her offended Parent.'

Julia wept bitterly when she read this Letter,—but much as she longed to adopt the course Arthur proposed to her, she had not the courage to do so. She feared that Horace might disapprove of her making any concessions to her Family; or that his pride might be offended if her Overtures towards a reconciliation, were either rejected altogether or received ungraciously. She was haunted with an almost childish dread of taking any step that might lower her in

her Husband's affection :—And she put off writing to Sir William from day to day,—until at length she persuaded herself that it was too late to think of writing to him at all.

Meanwhile Horace had become weary of the monotony of his secluded Chateau ; the purpose for which he had taken it was answered, and as solitude was no longer peculiarly desirable for Julia, he began to feel the expediency of considering in what part of the world they should next fix their abode. He was little inclined to establish himself permanently in France : his imagination wandered towards Italy, and he proposed to his Wife that they should proceed in that direction. He said, ‘ it would not be necessary to settle themselves in any one place ; as they might find it more amusing to visit all the principal Cities in turn, and to remain at each just as many weeks or months as they might think it agreeable to do so.’ In this way he promised to show her, without fatigue, every thing best worth seeing in that beautiful and interesting Country ; and he secretly hoped that constant variety, and frequent change of scene, would be

of much service in restoring her spirits, and assisting to banish painful images from her recollection.

Julia listened to this plan with a sort of passive indifference which showed how little satisfaction she expected to derive from any alteration of place ;—yet she expressed her approbation of all Horace's projected arrangements merely because *he* had devised them.

Lord Altamont, to whom he next announced his scheme, was much more cordially encouraging ; he wrote his Grandson word that he thought his decision a very judicious one, and that he advised him to lose no time in putting it into execution ;—adding sundry other admonitions and good wishes, which it is unnecessary to repeat, since they were very soon forgotten by the person to whom they were addressed.

Colonel and Mrs. Algernon had not many preparations to make for their Journey ; a seasonable remittance from Lord Altamont, facilitated their departure from the temporary Residence they had chosen ; and they set out on their route towards Italy, having determined to make Geneva a resting place in the first

instance. And there we will leave them for the present, while we return to Devonshire.

After the first transports of Sir William Shirley's grief had subsided, he bore his affliction with such unshaken fortitude that those who were but slightly acquainted with him, perceived little difference either in his appearance or in his manner; yet to the Friends who knew him intimately, it was evident that he was subdued in character and broken in spirit. His affection and solicitude seemed to be principally centered in his Daughter Emily; his delight in her society, and his anxious desire to promote her comfort and happiness, appeared to encrease every day; and it must be confessed that she had merited by her amiable and exemplary conduct to be thus beloved.

One morning when the Young Ladies were gone out walking, and the Baronet was left alone with Mrs. Vernon, he said to her,

“ I have been thinking, Louisa, that Arthur has been a long while a Captain, and that it is now high time he should get on in his Profession,—as I am sure he is well qualified to do. I have latterly learnt to

consider him so exactly in the light of my own Son, that I have written to him to mention my desire to be allowed to purchase him a step of rank ; and as I am not very conversant with the routine of military arrangements, I have requested him to put me in the way of setting about this in the form that will be most agreeable and advantageous to himself."

Mrs. Vernon expressed her gratitude very warmly to her Brother for the kindness of his intentions towards her Son.

"We certainly do not possess the means," added she, "to forward his advancement in the Army as you have generously proposed to do ; and even if it was in our power, Arthur has so proud and chivalrous a spirit," she smiled as she spoke these words ; "that I am not quite convinced he would consent to accept such assistance."

"All feelings of pride between him and me," replied Sir William, "are now out of the question ; perhaps I ought to plead guilty of having cherished something of that kind rather too long.—I know," he continued, after a pause, "that Military Men cannot

contrive to be constantly absent from their duty, yet I very much wish to see Arthur: there are a number of weighty and interesting matters that I am extremely anxious to talk over with him,—and I have consequently begged him to come and make us a visit here as soon as he can possibly get leave to do so. When you next write to him, I hope you will not fail to second my petition.”

“I will readily promise,” said Mrs. Vernon, “to obey an injunction so agreeable to myself, but I believe it will only be taking unnecessary trouble. Arthur will be happy enough to accept the kind and cordial invitation you have sent him; and I think I may venture to assure you that no eloquence of mine will be required to persuade him to come here very speedily.”

Sir William began to suspect from his Sister's manner, that she was better acquainted with some of his Family Secrets, than he had hitherto imagined; and this supposition led to an interesting confidential conversation between them, which proved highly gratifying and satisfactory to both:—and would not, there is

little doubt, have been at all less pleasing, (could they have been aware of it,) to the Parties themselves who were principally concerned in it.

Mrs. Vernon was not mistaken when she prophesied that her Son would very hastily obey his Uncle's summons. In about a week after he received it he wrote to Sir William to announce his immediate approach; he expressed much satisfaction at the prospect of seeing all his Relations, but added that he was afraid his visit must be a very short one.

“Perhaps we may be able to induce him to stay longer the next time,” observed the Baronet. “Remember Emily that as your Cousin is coming here upon *my* invitation, he is to be considered as *my* Guest; and that it will consequently be Your duty to assist me in the task of entertaining him, and endeavouring to render his séjour with us as agreeable as we can.”

Emily blushed very deeply, but did not attempt to make any reply. Perhaps she would not have found it easy to analyse her feelings at that moment.

Pleasure, gratitude, hope, and fear were so strange-

ly mingled together in her mind, that she scarcely knew whether she ought most to dread or to rejoice at the idea of meeting her Cousin, and of finding herself again in his society with the consciousness she now possessed that the sentiments she had formerly trembled to avow, were at length sanctioned by her Father's approbation.

If she had ever flattered herself that Arthur's affection for her was warmer than that of a very near Relation; the circumstances under which they had parted at Greyfield, had more than weakened such an agreeable suspicion. The honorable exertions he had made to conceal from her the anguish he endured at leaving her, had so successfully blinded her to the real state of his feelings,—that in spite of all Julia's hints and insinuations, she became convinced that he had only regarded her as a Friend or a Sister, and for his sake she tried to be pleased with this conviction. His subsequent conduct had, it is true, occasionally awakened certain doubts in her mind; and there had been something in his manner towards herself during their last painful meeting,

which it was equally impossible to describe or to mistake :—Yet after all, *this* might merely have arisen from a strong and affectionate feeling of sympathy for the misfortune he had come to communicate.—She saw that her Father believed Arthur was attached to her, but she feared that his kind partiality towards her had perhaps led him to form this opinion erroneously ; and she trembled with agony at the probability of his unguardedly betraying to her Cousin those thoughts upon the subject, which were evidently engrossing much of his own attention.—In short, she was tormented with a thousand secret and distressing anxieties.

The expected Guest arrived, and if his Sisters perceived any unusual degree of embarrassment and timidity in his air when he approached Emily, they attributed the circumstance to his recollection of the afflicting nature of his former Visit ;—and it was the same cause, they also imagined, which occasioned the rapid variation of Emily's colour and the agitated tone of her voice, when she replied to his anxious enquiries about her own and her Father's health.

Captain Vernon himself was in a state of no ordinary excitement. He did not dare to indulge those hopes which the kind summons he had received from his Uncle seemed almost to warrant, and yet he found it beyond his power entirely to repress them. Sir William did not keep him very long in this uncomfortable suspense. Even before dinner he contrived to call him aside, and taking him into his own room, began talking to him of his future prospects.

After mentioning how desirous he was that he should obtain his promotion, the Baronet added ‘ that he must excuse him if he ventured to touch upon a circumstance which it was natural to suppose might be likely to have some influence upon his views and feelings.—To explain himself in a few words, he said that soon after he had left Greyfield, he had had reason to suspect that his affections had become engaged.’

Arthur started violently at this direct attack, but answered firmly and immediately,

“ That he had no wish to evade a question which his Uncle’s kindness alone, would have well entitled

him to ask,—independently of all other considerations. He was therefore ready to plead guilty to the charge of presumption, and to confess that Sir William's suspicions had been accurately founded."

"Having obtained this frank avowal," replied the Baronet, "You must not think me ungenerous if I press you still further, and request you to tell me if the sentiments you then entertained are yet unchanged?"

Arthur's lip quivered as he said, "the attachment which I have never before confided to any one, stole so unconsciously upon me, that I was not aware of its existence until it had become too powerful to be subdued. The instant I discovered the state of my own heart, I tore myself away from the Object of an affection which hopeless as I well know it to be, neither time nor absence can have the slightest effect in diminishing."

"My noble minded Arthur," exclaimed Sir William, seizing his Nephew's hand, "this is just what I expected of you. Such behaviour and such constancy as Yours is sure to be in the end rewarded as it de-

serves. You are aware that I had formerly other and more ambitious views, and also that those views were defeated.—Since that time all my circumstances have undergone a sad and melancholy change. Of three Children, I may now say that only one remains to me,—and the future happiness of that matchless Child is the sole interest that still attaches me to this world. I need not tell you that I never have, and never will, attempt to influence Emily's choice ; but if You can succeed in obtaining her affection, it will give me sincere pleasure to bestow upon you her hand.—Remember however," he added with a smile, "that the young Lady who could find in her heart to refuse so great a Man as Lord Stanmore, cannot be very easily won.—Now do not look so wildly, and let me hear no more of gratitude," cried Sir William, as Arthur tried to put into words, what he found it almost impossible to express.

"It is growing so late that our conversation must come to an end. I actually hear the Dinner Bell, and the Ladies, not to mention your Father, will think us very uncivil if we keep them long waiting."

At Dinner Arthur was placed beside his Mother, and although the conversation was of course general, it was to her that his attentions was principally directed. He seemed to be in a remarkably happy frame of mind, but it must be confessed that his answers and observations occasionally betrayed a degree of absence, of which, when in a similar neighbourhood, he had never before been guilty.

In the evening he advanced towards the Sofa where the young Ladies were seated, and addressing his Sister, requested her to make room for him between Emily and herself.

“We are both Emily’s,” said she with a smile, as she instantly moved to admit him, “and we are now become so completely blended into one Family, that I believe I may venture to add that we both consider ourselves your Sisters.”

This affectionate and well-intended remark, did not appear to please Arthur; a cloud passed over his brow, and he bit his lip as he replied half in joke and half in anger,

“*You* and Louisa who have had the happiness of

living with Emily as Sisters for many months, may well feel proud of being authorized to consider her as such:—but with *me* the case is very different. *I* have never been accustomed to think of her exactly in that light, and I have now little wish to take so bold a step as to accept your challenge, and claim the privilege of calling *Miss Shirley* by that title.” Then lowering his voice, and turning towards his Cousin, he continued,—

“ Though I hope it is unnecessary for me to assure her that she is not *less* dear to me than a *Sister*.”

Emily Vernon did not hear this concluding sentence, there was something in her Brother’s behaviour that puzzled her; it seemed little less than ungracious to Emily, and she feared that the latter had felt it so, when she perceived that she changed colour and looked much confused.

Louisa, who was more quick-sighted, began to entertain a vague suspicion of the truth, and by alluding to Arthur’s long visit at Greyfield, she relieved him from any embarrassment he might have felt at entering at once upon that subject.

He reminded his Cousin of many little circumstances, and retraced various scenes which had occurred during the period he had spent under his Uncle's roof; and Emily, who had entirely regained her self-possession, at length observed, "that those were indeed happy times, and that it always gave her the greatest pleasure to think of them.—Poor Julia," continued she with a sigh, "How much I shall miss her when I return to Greyfield! I have not a single recollection of that place which is not associated with her."

Arthur ventured to enquire if either She or Sir William had ever heard from her Sister? He found they had not, and that her Father had been much hurt by her never having made the slightest attempt to obtain his forgiveness, or taken any sort of notice of him after the heavy affliction she had been the means of drawing down upon him.

"Culpable as Julia has been," said her Cousin, "I have good reason to know that this last apparent neglect, arose rather from false shame than from any heartless want of natural affection."

He then mentioned the Letter he had himself received from her, and the advice he had given her in his answer.

Emily was much surprised and relieved at gaining such direct intelligence of her Sister, and upon this foundation she immediately grounded a hope of being able to effect a reconciliation between her and her Father.

The evening passed rapidly away, and long before its conclusion Miss Shirley felt an agreeable persuasion that she need never have tormented herself with any apprehension of not having been beloved by her Cousin.

The following morning Arthur imparted the secret of his attachment to his favorite Sister Louisa, and by taking away Emily she contrived to procure him the tête-à-tête he so much wished for with his Cousin. He lost no time in pleading the warmth of that affection, which he said ‘ he had hitherto felt it an imperious duty studiously to conceal;’ and he was more than recompensed for all the distress he had suffered, by hearing Emily confess ‘ that as the sentiments he

had just avowed—had been mutual, the trial he described that he had endured for her sake had in some degree been mutual also.’

There was so much on both sides to talk over and to explain, that the Tale was still half untold when Louisa came to summon the conscious Pair to Luncheon.

It is unnecessary to add that Sir William Shirley readily confirmed the sanction he had already given to Arthur’s hopes, and that He and Emily soon received the blessings and congratulations of all the Party.—No Union ever seemed to promise a fairer prospect of happiness to the Individuals principally concerned, or could possibly afford more complete satisfaction to every body connected with them; and Emily Vernon laughed heartily at her own stupidity in having imagined that her Brother felt some unaccountable aversion for his Cousin.

It was not until after every thing was settled, that Arthur delicately informed his Uncle that poor William had, during his last moments, foretold the probability of his Alliance with Emily, and had expressed a very kind wish that it might eventually take place.

Sir William Shirley was very desirous that Captain and Mrs. Arthur Vernon should spend the greatest part of their time at Greyfield, even if they thought it expedient to have some nominal home of their own; and to this proposal, Arthur was extremely willing to assent. Indeed, circumstanced as the Baronet now was, he would not for an instant have meditated the selfish cruelty of separating him entirely from the only remaining comfort of his life.

Our Hero had formerly been much devoted to his Profession, but in quiet times,—and perhaps since his acquaintance with his Cousin,—he had grown tired of the uniform routine of Military Duty; and he felt no reluctance at the idea of giving up, at least for the present, what had become no longer interesting to him.

It was agreed that his Uncle should purchase him a Majority as soon as possible, and that he should then go upon Half Pay; an arrangement that might enable him to return to the Service at any future period, when the prospect of more active employment held out an inducement to encourage him to wish to do so.

As his Marriage was to be deferred until his affairs at the Horse Guards were finally concluded, it was judged that it would be more agreeable for both parties that their Engagement should not as yet be publicly declared; but it was confidentially communicated to their particular Friends, and among these of course to Adelaide Fauconberg, who sympathised most warmly in Emily's happiness.

Arthur wrote a very kind Letter to Julia; he did not tell her that this measure had received Sir William's concurrence, but he said he was commissioned by her Sister to give her her best love, accompanied by an assurance of her continued affection; and he exhorted her not to neglect the opportunity afforded her by the Event that was about to take place in her Family, of endeavouring to open an amicable communication with her Father.

CHAP. XXXIV.

“ She raised her eyes in mournful mood,—

“ Wilton himself before her stood !”

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

THE Spring was already far advanced when Colonel Henry Algernon landed in England. The first News that greeted him upon his arrival, was his Cousin Horace's Marriage, and the dreadful Story of Mr. Shirley's fate. The former intelligence surprised him not a little, and the Catastrophe which had followed it, shocked him excessively. Had his Rival died a natural death, it is not to be supposed that he would personally have regretted him, but as it was, he could not think of his decease without horror, and he felt an anxious desire to know how Adelaide had been affected by so unlooked for, and appalling an event.

The report of Miss Fauconberg's intended Marriage

had reached Henry in the West Indies, and had occasioned him the most agonizing distress of mind.

Something he had afterwards indistinctly heard of the Wedding having been suddenly put off in consequence of the dangerous illness of the Bride ;—but all that he had been able to ascertain with any certainty, was that her Engagement with Mr. Shirley had been either delayed for a time, or brought entirely to an end. He was much inclined to suspect that Adelaide never could bring herself to like William as a Husband, but he knew how ardently Lady Fauconberg advocated the Alliance ; and he always imagined that she would at length succeed in persuading her Daughter to enter into it.

It may easily be supposed that Colonel Henry Algernon repaired with as little delay as possible to Altamont Castle. He found his Grandfather shaken in health and depressed in spirits by the distress he had recently suffered upon Horace's account ; and he rejoiced that he had himself returned to his Native Country at a moment when his presence and Society might prove peculiarly useful to the poor old Peer.

He endeavoured by every means in his power to comfort and cheer him, and he had soon the pleasure of observing that his efforts were not entirely unsuccessful.

Meanwhile his thoughts frequently turned upon his own future prospects, and these only seemed to present a melancholy and cheerless blank.

All hope of domestic happiness had abandoned him when he took leave of Fauconberg Manor. The perspective afforded by the expectation of wandering from year to year with a Marching Regiment, in time of Peace, from one dull Country Quarter to another; was so little in unison with any of his former habits and ideas, that he could not look forward to it without disgust.—To give up his profession entirely, appeared out of the question. He was not attached by any permanent tie to place or Country, and he began to consider why he might not be qualified to fill some little Diplomatic Situation Abroad, could such be procured for him by his Family interest.

Lord Altamont had arrangements to make and

business to conclude relative to Horace's affairs, which obliged him to go for a short time to London; and thither it was agreed that Henry should accompany him. He had not yet ventured to mention his crude and undecided plans to his Grandfather, but he determined that he would speak to him about them during this journey, and ask him for his counsel and advice upon a subject so interesting to them both.

When the two Algernons first came back from the Peninsular, Lord Altamont resolved to add the Portraits of his handsome Grandsons to his large collection of Family Pictures at Altamont Castle, and he accordingly had them taken by one of the most celebrated Artists in London. They were both good likenesses,—that of Horace in particular was a very highly finished painting, and much study had been bestowed by the Original upon endeavouring to render the Costume as becoming as possible. In those days he knew and cared very little about Works of Art, he considered the sittings a great bore,—but as his resemblance was to be handed down to posterity,

he wished that it should appear to the best advantage.

During his *séjour* afterwards in Italy however, he acquired a taste for Pictures ; he learnt to understand them, and to become a judge of their merits and of their defects ; and when he looked again at his own Portrait the last time he visited Altamont Castle, he discovered that in his anxiety to display the full splendour of a brilliant Uniform, he had insisted upon making the colouring of the Picture too gaudy, and had given it something of the effect of a flaming Figure upon a Sign Post ;—at least it reminded him disagreeably of that sort of representation.—The Artist had hinted this objection and had remonstrated against the Dress Horace had chosen, but his arguments were overruled, and he was obliged to give up the point to him who would never submit to be guided by any opinion but his own.

It now occurred to Colonel Algernon that by introducing a Military Cloak and a little additional shade, his original mistake might very easily be rectified. He often talked of this idea to Lord Altamont,

and as he could not bear to see his Picture in its present state, he declared that he should take the earliest opportunity of requesting the Person who had painted it to reconsider his work, and put the proposed improvement into execution.

Before Lord Altamont now left home, he suggested to Henry that the Portrait should be taken down, and that the alteration Horace had been so extremely desirous to have carried into effect, should if possible be made under their joint superintendence while they remained in London.

Accordingly a few days after their arrival in Town, they called upon the Artist by appointment; the Portrait had been previously sent to his House, and Lord Altamont delicately reminded him of his former ineffectual remonstrance against the taste of the Costume. He added, “that his Grandson’s judgment in such matters had become more correct; that he perceived the error he had fallen into; and was anxious that so fine a specimen of Art, should be rendered more perfect by undergoing a slight change, and being finished in conformity to the first design of him who had so ably executed it.”

He then hinted those alterations which Horace himself had so frequently explained to him.

The Painter agreed at once to the justice of a critique which had in fact been his own. He immediately described the improvements which he thought might judiciously and advantageously be made, and which were also in accordance with what he understood to be the wish of the Original; and he promised to set about them without delay. The Picture was considered one of his best performances, but it had never quite satisfied him, though his endeavours to do justice to so handsome a Study had cost him no ordinary labour; and he was consequently much pleased at being allowed to remove those blemishes which had hitherto marred its perfection.

The Walls of the Room in which he received his Guests, were nearly covered with finished and unfinished Paintings, while others in various stages of progress were confusedly grouped in different corners.

Henry was examining some of these, when Lord Altamont entered a small inner apartment, (the Artist's painting Closet,) where a Single Picture,—the work upon which he was just then engaged, stood conspi-

cuous upon his Easel. The old Peer looked at it for some time, and then said,

“ May I venture to enquire the name of that very pretty and interesting^e looking young Lady ? ”

“ It is Miss Fauconberg, my Lord,” replied the Painter, “ The Daughter of Sir George Fauconberg. She is indeed *very* interesting. She is an only Child, and as she has it seems been long in bad health, her Parents appear very uneasy about her. From a conversation I had a few days ago with her Father, I imagine that they have some intention of taking her to the South of France.—Whenever I work at that Picture, I cannot help feeling a melancholy foreboding that the Original will not very long survive its completion.”

The name of Miss Fauconberg caught Henry’s ear, he darted forward to obtain a view of her resemblance, and listened with mingled grief and alarm to the fearful account that had just been given of her health.

“ The features are certainly extremely like ” observed he at length in a sort of Soliloquy,——“ but she must be very sadly altered ! ”

“ You are acquainted then with Miss Fauconberg ?” said the Artist, who had observed with some surprise the intense and melancholy interest with which he had gazed upon the Picture.

“ I knew her formerly, but I have not seen her for several years.—From what I have now heard, I suppose she is at present in Town.”

“ She is. She is coming here this morning to give me her last sitting.”

Before these words were concluded, a loud knock at the entrance door announced the approach of Visitors, and a moment afterwards their footsteps were heard in the adjoining Room. The Artist looked at his Watch.

“ Excuse me, my Lord,” said he, “ it is much later than I imagined, and you are aware that my time is not at my own disposal. I am afraid Lady Fauconberg and her Daughter are arrived.”

“ Pray make no apologies,” replied Lord Altamont, “ We ought to be ashamed of ourselves for having intruded upon you so long. We will here wish you good morning, and remain, if you will allow us, in

the next Room until my Carriage comes up to the door."

The Painter rung the bell to desire that it might be called ; " I will not leave you alone," said he with a smile ; " They are silent Companions to be sure, but you will find many of your Friends amongst the canvass upon those walls."

Meanwhile Henry Algernon seemed perfectly electrified by thus unexpectedly finding himself under the same roof, and almost in the presence of her whom he most wished and yet most dreaded to meet. For an instant he stood irresolute, and his eye glanced quickly round the little Apartment as if he was desirous to discover if it might not be possible to effect his escape without being obliged to pass through the larger one where the Ladies were waiting ; but the only egress from the Closet, was through the door by which he had entered it : and as it was lit by a sky-light, it did not afford him even the desperate option of breaking his neck by jumping out of a window.—No alternative was left him but to come forward with as much apparent indifference as he

could assume ; and considering the circumstances under which Adelaide and he had parted,—he did so with a very uncomfortable feeling of uncertainty as to the probability of being simply acknowledged as a former Acquaintance, or studiously disregarded as an entire Stranger.

Colonel Algernon's Picture had been placed in a prominent situation in the outer Room, it was also a new feature there, and as such it had naturally attracted Miss Fauconberg's attention. She was much startled by its likeness to Henry, and at first she imagined it must have been intended for him ;—but upon examining it more closely, she perceived her mistake, and easily guessed who had been the real Original. She became so deeply engrossed in contemplating this Portrait, that she was not aware any body had come into the room, until she was roused by a half suppressed exclamation of Lady Fauconberg's and by hearing the voice of the Artist just behind her. She turned round hastily to speak to him, half ashamed of the absence into which she had been betrayed,—and in so doing her eyes met those of Henry Algernon.

She knew that he had arrived in England, but she had heard nothing of him since his return, and the surprise of seeing him thus unexpectedly, quite overcame her ; she turned pale, a sort of hysterical scream burst from her lips, and she fainted.

Lady Fauconberg's arm saved Adelaide from falling, and she gladly accepted Colonel Algernon's assistance in supporting her apparently lifeless Form to the nearest chair. With her usual presence of mind, she then said aloud,

“ My Daughter is in very delicate health, and she has latterly been much subject to these kind of nervous attacks. They are very distressing while they last, and may appear alarming to those who have not been accustomed to witness them ; but they do not really afford any cause for uneasiness, and they generally prove of very short duration.”

Then lowering her voice, and addressing herself peculiarly to Henry, she added,

“ You need not look so terrified,—I assure you she will very soon be better.”

The Painter who had ran to fetch a glass of water,

now returned and presented it to Lady Fauconberg; she sprinkled a few drops in her Daughter's face, observing "that she would be very glad to take a little more of it when she began to revive.—Perhaps Colonel Algernon," she continued, "you will have the goodness to ask for my Carriage.—As I fear that Adelaide will not be well enough to sit for her Picture this morning, I believe the wisest thing I can do will be to take her home as soon as possible. After she has had one of these affections, I always contrive to keep her quite quiet for a few hours. It is most desirable, when she first comes to herself that no object should attract her attention that can be likely to distress her or to agitate her Spirits."

Henry could neither misunderstand this hint or refuse to obey it, but while he stole a last glance of those pale features which he imagined he was destined never to behold again,—Adelaide opened her eyes. She seemed half unconscious where she was, or what had happened to her? but some sort of confused recollection of the past was evidently floating in her mind, for she indistinctly pronounced the name of "Henry."

The command which Colonel Algernon had hitherto maintained over his feelings, now gave way at once, and forgetting every thing in the violence of his long smothered affection, he threw himself upon his knees before Miss Fauconberg, and seizing her hand,—passionately exclaimed,

“ Adelaide, dearest Adelaide, speak to me once again. Let me hear you tell me, I beseech you, that my unfortunate appearance,—my unwelcome presence,—have not quite killed You.”

“ Colonel Algernon,” cried Lady Fauconberg, “ this is really insufferable. I say nothing of the exposure you have thought proper to make, since its absurdity rests entirely upon Yourself. But it becomes my duty to warn you that the health of my Child, perhaps even her *Life*,” and she laid peculiar emphasis upon the last word; “ may be endangered by a continuation of such madness. Let me request you to endeavour to recover your composure, and immediately to join the Gentlemen in the next room.”

For she now perceived that Lord Altamont had

considerately withdrawn from the apartment, and had also contrived to take the Painter away with him.

Henry rose in an agony of shame, despair, and resentment; and Adelaide who had by this time recovered from the effects of her astonishment, had no difficulty in comprehending the probable nature of his feelings.

Mustering her courage by a desperate effort, "Stay one moment," she began, "I must not let you leave me thus. I do not know how I can express what I wish to say to you,—yet I am unwilling to lose the most favorable opportunity that may ever come in my way, of requesting that heartless and unworthy as I have perhaps hitherto appeared to you; you will in future look upon my former conduct in the most charitable possible light.—Were you perfectly acquainted with the truth, you would I think allow that I have been a person more sinned against than sinning."

"That is an assertion," replied Henry, "which you will very easily persuade me to believe.—Alas! how ardently do I wish that Sir George and Lady

Fauconberg would permit me in return to endeavour to plead a few words in my own justification, to you."

"This," said her Ladyship, "is neither a time or place for long explanations, nor is Adelaide just now sufficiently calm to be able to listen to them with advantage. It is certainly very desirable that all misconstructions *de part et d'autre*, (and many such have occurred between us;) should be finally cleared away; and as the management of this delicate business ought properly to be entrusted to Sir George, he will I am sure, if you will give me your address, have much pleasure in calling upon you before you go out to-morrow morning."

Colonel Algernon took a Card from his pocket, observed "that he was staying with Lord Altamont, and that he should certainly remain at home until any hour when it might best suit Sir George's convenience to visit him."

"And now," continued Lady Fauconberg, "since it seems probable that we may meet again at no very distant period, I hope you will not object a second

time to facilitating our present separation.—In other words that you will oblige me by enquiring for my Carriage.”

Henry went immediately into the passage to obey her Ladyship's command, and when he returned he found her in deep conversation with the Artist, repeating her apologies about taking away her Daughter, and settling the day and hour for a future sitting.

He did not feel quite sure if he might dare to offer his arm to Adelaide, but a gracious smile from her Mother encouraged him to do so. She took it without speaking, but as he thought, with evident pleasure; and as he conducted her to the Carriage he ventured to say to her in a low voice,

“ When I entered this house an hour ago, melancholy, forlorn, and hopeless; how little did I anticipate the happy alteration that would take place in all my feelings before I again passed its threshold. May I,—tell me at once, may I flatter myself that any favorable change in my future destiny will be likely to result from my interview with your Father to-morrow?”

“ I must not,” replied Adelaide with a sigh, “ give you any decided opinion upon so uncertain a subject as your future destiny ; yet this much I may say, that I hope after your meeting with my Father is over, we shall both feel happier than we have done since we parted.”

CHAP. XXXV.

Don Pedro. “ — — — What offence have these men done ?

Dogberry. “ Marry, Sir, they have committed false report ;

“ Moreover they have spoken untruths ;

“ Secondarily, they are slanders ;

“ Sixth and lastly, they have belied a *[Gentleman ;]

“ Thirdly, they have verified unjust things :

“ And, to conclude, they are lying Knaves.”

SHAKSPEARE.

LORD ALTAMONT was extremely curious to learn what had passed between Miss Fauconberg and his Grandson. Henry gave him a faithful sketch of the scene, but confessed there was so much mystery attached to the cause of their former separation, that he was himself still at a loss entirely to understand it. He added, that he had great hopes he should be able, when he had seen Sir George, to give a more intelligible explanation of the subject ; or what might be far better, to communicate the agreeable information,

* *Lady.*

that all ground of his difference and dispute with the Fauconberg Family being happily removed,—they had mutually determined to forget that any Feud had ever existed to divide them.

“ For your sake my dear Henry,” said Lord Altamont, “ I sincerely trust that this may prove the case. I own too that Miss Fauconberg’s appearance has prepossessed me not a little in her favour, and I am very willing to think that I have been guilty of injustice in imputing blame to *Her*. Still I cannot divest myself of the opinion that you were ill used ; and I am anxious to put you upon your guard against the artifices of those who have already acted towards you with any thing but good faith. You have suffered much from their treachery,—and before such a warning is too late, let me now beseech you not to endanger your future peace of mind by allowing yourself to be a second time imposed upon by delusive hopes.”

Henry thanked Lord Altamont for his kindness, and promised to remember, and to attend to his hints ; yet they did not in the slightest degree abate

the sanguine and feverish impatience with which he looked forward to the Baronet's visit. During *that* visit he felt that his happiness or misery must be finally decided ; various agitating considerations pressed upon his mind, and his spirits were at length wrought up to a state of excitement which almost bordered upon delirium.

Sir George did not prolong his suspense by any unnecessary delay. He was announced at an earlier hour than the generality of Guests are expected, and his naturally frank and cordial manner diminished the unavoidable awkwardness which attended his first entrance. Henry's anxious enquiries about Miss Fauconberg's health, led at once to the subject he had come purposely to discuss, and he immediately took advantage of the opening thus fortunately afforded him.

He told Colonel Algernon, " that he had been for a great while very desirous to have an opportunity of explaining to him a mystery, and requesting his forgiveness for an unhappy mistake into which he had been betrayed respecting those sad events he had

alluded to before they parted at Fauconberg Manor."

—He said "that it was not until very long after he had left England, that he accidentally discovered the injustice of which he had unintentionally been guilty; not indeed until after its fatal consequences had drawn down a most distressing punishment upon his own Family.—That his first impulse upon learning his error, had been a wish to acknowledge it, and endeavour as far as might be possible to repair it. But that upon reflection he found this would be difficult, almost impracticable;—since the Story he had to relate involved so many delicate circumstances that he could not venture to commit it to paper, or to bring it under consideration in any other way than during a personal interview with himself."

Sir George then minutely related the manner in which the anonymous communication had been conveyed to him; and taking the Letter as he did so from his pocket, begged Colonel Algernon would do him the favour to look it over attentively.

"Had I insisted upon your reading it when I originally received it," added he, "all the mischief it

afterwards occasioned would have been averted. I have frequently reproached myself for not having pursued that straight forward course."

"I well remember," replied Henry, "that you offered me a sight of a Letter, and proposed to me to read my accusation; but I was at that moment too indignant to condescend even to look at it.—I will gladly set about studying it now."

He perused the Manuscript accordingly with the greatest care, and not without evident emotion; indeed he scarcely attempted to disguise those feelings of grief and anger which it alternately awakened.

"I have acted like a Madman!" exclaimed he at length. "Had not my foolish pride deprived me of the means of defending myself,—by teaching me to disdain examining the charge that was brought against me; every thing would at once have been explained, and my character would have been satisfactorily cleared from the foul stain which has been so basely and scandalously cast upon it."

Then in a musing tone he continued,—

"This Letter must have been written by some per-

son perfectly acquainted with every circumstance of poor Basilia's History. It is very artfully and cleverly composed.—Who can possibly have been the Author of it ?”

“I will answer that question in one word,” said Sir George, interrupting the sort of Soliloquy into which Henry had fallen. “You cannot have forgotten Thomas Woodgate.”

“Woodgate,” cried Colonel Algernon in an accent of surprise. “Nobody who had been in any way concerned with him, could ever forget him. A treacherous, designing Villain he always was. I have not met with any Man, either before or since I knew him, so desperately wicked and revengeful.—It must certainly have been *him* who contrived this falsehood, for no other person is in possession of our fatal secret. I begin to understand the mystery now, and if I had not been unpardonably stupid, I must have discovered it sooner, Yet,” observed he, again examining the Letter, “Woodgate must have had an Accomplice ; he might, and undoubtedly did, furnish the information upon which this Romance is founded ; but the

style and language are superior to any thing he could have composed without assistance."

"Your suspicion is perfectly just," replied Sir George. "I am sorry to say that Woodgate was only employed as the tool of a person whose situation in the world ought to have raised him far above the dishonour of falsely and clandestinely destroying the reputation of a Rival, and the degradation of condescending to league himself in iniquity with such a worthless associate in order to accomplish his unprincipled purpose."

Henry was horror-struck by the new light which now suddenly burst upon his mind. Sir George touched slightly upon the anguish his Daughter had suffered when the Story which had occasioned his departure was first cautiously revealed to her.

"And did Miss Fauconberg too believe me guilty? Did *she* think me capable of having endeavoured to gain her affections when I knew that my hand had been secretly stained by the commission of so dreadful a Crime?" asked Henry in a voice of bitter agony.

"Adelaide was willing," replied the Baronet, "to

pity you. To admit every possible excuse as a palliation of your misfortune ; but she could discover no plea to doubt your guilt when her Father stated it to her as a *positive fact* which had even been confirmed to him by your own admission. For I must now candidly tell you, that in our last ambiguous conversation, I imagined you had confessed the truth of the accusation which had been brought against you."

Colonel Algernon remained some moments lost in thought.

"I have been trying," said he at length, "to recollect every word that passed between us on that unhappy night; and with the impression you then had upon your mind, I must allow that I answered your questions in such a manner as naturally to confirm your worst suspicions. Any Person in your circumstances would have put the same construction upon my replies that You did ; and considering the opinion you must have entertained of me, I can only wonder at the temper and forbearance with which you treated me.—You appear to be now fully aware that I have been basely calumniated, but still it is

imperiously necessary that I should give you a minute and accurate Version of my real share in this melancholy and unfortunate transaction.”

“ I will listen with pleasure bye and by,” replied Sir George, “ to any recital you may judge it expedient to enter into, but I trust you will first permit me to finish my own explanation.”

He then briefly mentioned the little Tour he had made with his Family Abroad,—the encreased intimacy with their Neighbours at Greyfield,—and the consequent renewal of Mr. Shirley’s attentions to his Daughter. He confessed that Lady Fauconberg and himself had wished Adelaide to receive these more favorably than she was inclined to do ;—that she had long remained inexorable upon the subject,—and that at last it was merely from a secret sense of duty towards her Parents, that she had consented to form an Union which she saw they ardently desired.—That it was not until the morning this miserable Marriage was to have been celebrated,—that, instigated by a new impulse of revenge, Mr. Shirley’s wretched Accomplice disclosed the whole train of his treachery

to its destined Victim.—He detailed at considerable length every part of the communication which Woodgate had made upon that memorable occasion, and added that the shock Adelaide had naturally received from it, had brought on a violent illness, from the effects of which she had as yet by no means recovered.

Henry's indignation at Mr. Shirley's conduct knew no bounds.

“ Did you allow his wicked treachery,” exclaimed he, “ to escape unpunished ? Did you not expose his heartless villany to all the world ? ”

“ I felt as much disposed as You can be, to do so,” answered Sir George, “ And if I spared him it was out of no consideration of pity towards himself.—In a private interview I gave him to understand that his Confederate had betrayed him ; and I can never forget the agony and humiliation he evidently suffered at that moment.—I saw him afterwards no more.—Had I published his dishonour I should perhaps have broken his poor Father's heart, and it was for my Friend Sir William's sake that I determined to conceal his

disgrace.—Another reflection might also have had much force in prompting me to pursue the same line of conduct. It would have been impossible for me to make out my own Story against Mr. Shirley, without disclosing circumstances connected with your Family, which I well knew you ardently wished should remain buried in oblivion.—It is but justice to Adelaide, to add that she had the generosity anxiously to request me to screen the character of the Person who had so deeply injured her,—though she was conscious that by so doing, much blame would undeservedly be imputed to herself.—The awful fate of this wretched young Man, has since led me sincerely to rejoice at having saved Sir William the bitter aggravation of being aware in his affliction, of the worthless and degraded character of the Son whose loss he affectionately deplores.”

Colonel Algernon was sensibly affected by the different details he had just heard, and much impressed with admiration of the magnanimity both Adelaide and her Father had shown in their conduct towards Mr. Shirley. He was beginning to express this, when Sir George continued,

“The ways of Providence are wonderful and mysterious, and it has always struck me that there appeared a something like retribution in the circumstances of William Shirley’s death.—Considering the various links by which their fates had been connected, it was very remarkable that he should have fallen by the hand of Colonel Algernon.”

“It was certainly curious,” replied Henry. “Poor Horace! His misdeeds have, unknown to himself, been the cause of all the misery I have suffered; and He also it is who has unconsciously in so signal a manner avenged my wrongs.—But,” continued he very anxiously, “You hinted just now that Miss Fauconberg’s health had been seriously affected by Mr. Shirley’s treachery,—and my own observation yesterday had already awakened my alarm upon that subject.—I hope you have no ground to be disquieted by more than temporary uneasiness about her.”

“I hope not,” answered Sir George, gravely. “I cannot see any reason to apprehend the impossibility of her regaining in time her former bloom and strength; yet I will not conceal from you that Lady

Fauconberg and I—have been long, and still continue very uncomfortable about her. Perhaps our extreme anxiety to preserve so inestimable a treasure makes us feel over anxious and apprehensive.—You think Adelaide looking ill and altered *now*, but had you seen her last year when she was first recovering from her fever, you would have had no idea that she could ever have been restored even to her present appearance. When I recollect how fearfully delicate she was *then*, I am encouraged to look forward with some degree of sanguine confidence to the happy improvement that may take place in a few more months.”

Colonel Algernon turned away his head to hide the emotion which he had not power to repress. Sir George was too much overcome to attempt to speak; and it was not till after a very long pause that the former found courage to say,

“There is one question I very much wish to ask you Sir George, yet I scarcely know if I may venture to do so.”

“Why need you be afraid of me?” replied the Baronet kindly, “there is no information you can

require, which if I am able, I will not cheerfully give you. I shall fancy you still mistrust me, if you do not tell me at once what it is that you wish to learn."

Henry still hesitated,—at length he said,—

"I can endure the tortures of suspense no longer, I must hear my fate in one word!—May I dare to encourage a hope, that whatever she may once have thought of me, I am not now quite indifferent to Miss Fauconberg?"

He fixed his eyes upon his Companion's countenance as he uttered these words, and his very life seemed to depend upon the reply he expected to receive from him.

Sir George smiled. "You must address *that* question," observed he, "to Miss Fauconberg herself, *She* will be much more capable of answering it satisfactorily than I can be; and as you seem rather impatient to ascertain her sentiments, perhaps you will like to join us this afternoon in Kensington Gardens. We shall go there about four o'clock." Then perceiving that Henry was almost bewildered with his happiness, he held out his hand and continued in a more serious tone,—

“My dear Colonel Algernon we now again understand each other, had we always done so we never should have ceased to be Friends. Let us mutually endeavour to forget the past, and to hope that we may still at some future period be connected by nearer and dearer ties than even those of *Friendship*.”

Henry tried in vain to express the feelings with which his heart was overflowing.

“I must leave you,” said Sir George, “and I shall go away with less regret because I am sure it will at this moment do you no harm to find yourself for a little while alone.”

“Will you not allow me to introduce you to my Grandfather?” asked Colonel Algernon, attempting to detain him.

“I shall be proud,” replied the Baronet, “to become personally acquainted with Lord Altamont at some other opportunity; but I think it will be expedient to defer my introduction to him until you have ascertained from himself that it will be agreeable to him that it should take place.”

“That he will be delighted to be made known to you I will readily engage to answer for,” exclaimed

Henry. “But perhaps, as you say, it may be better to prepare him to see you, by relating to him how happily our interview has terminated.—It will require some consideration to devise in what manner this communication can be most judiciously made, for of course I must contrive to avoid the slightest allusion to any circumstance connected with Horace.”

Henry did accordingly give Lord Altamont such an account of what had passed, as perfectly satisfied his Grandfather's curiosity, without betraying the Secret he had kept so faithfully, and suffered so much to conceal. And he was deeply gratified by the kind and affectionate warmth with which the old Peer participated in his happiness.

It is almost needless to say that Colonel Algernon did not forget to keep his engagement very punctually that afternoon in Kensington Gardens, indeed he had been pacing up and down before the Gate for a long time before the expected Carriage with Servants in the well-known Fauconberg Livery appeared in sight.

Lady Fauconberg condescended to smile upon him very graciously when he came forward to hand her

out of it; but as Sir George immediately presented her his arm, he could not in civility do less than offer his own to her Daughter, who accepted it with a blush of conscious pleasure.

It so happened that the whole Party instead of following the Crowd to the fashionable part of the Gardens, preferred turning their steps into one of the more retired Walks; and Adelaide and Colonel Algernon soon became so deeply interested in their own conversation, that had they chanced to be surrounded by all the Persons of their acquaintance, they would perhaps scarcely have been aware of their presence. They had mutually many things to learn, and much to explain; but Henry would only allow his Companion to touch slightly upon those circumstances, the recollection of which he thought likely to agitate her. In this manner the time flew rapidly away, and Lady Fauconberg was obliged to remind Adelaide ‘that they must positively return home, since she had already taken a much longer walk than she had lately been accustomed to.’

“We shall see you to-morrow,” said Sir George to Henry, when they parted. “I would ask you to

look in upon us this evening, but my Young Lady now keeps very early hours; and as she has had a good deal to excite her in the course of the morning, we shall wish her to remain as quiet as possible during the rest of the day."

Colonel Algernon felt the necessity of this caution. The more he saw of Adelaide, the more painfully did he become aware of the extreme delicacy of her appearance; it threw a fearful chill over all his bright prospects of happiness, and he could not help perceiving from some of her expressions, that she seemed to be herself fully sensible of the precarious state of her health.

The whole of her present conduct, and every thing she had just told him, had raised his admiration of her character if possible, even higher than it had been before; and as he bade her farewell—he felt that she had become dearer to him than ever.

He would have been not a little delighted could he have read what was at that moment passing in her mind, and have discovered that his own behaviour under circumstances both of trial and prosperity, had left an equally favorable impression there.

CHAP. XXXVI.

“ Known to no human love, no human care,
“ The friendless, homeless Object of despair ;
“ For the poor Vagrant feel, — — — — —

“ Alike if folly or misfortune brought
“ Those last of woes his evil days have wrought ;”

C R A B B E .

“ WHAT a fatiguing place this is !” said our worthy Friend Mrs. Sutton to her Sister, after they had been toiling up and down Kensington Gardens for more than an hour beneath a scorching Sun, for the agreeable purpose of meeting their Friends, and gazing at the smart people and at the fashions. “ I am really tired to death, and almost melted with the heat !”

“ It is certainly rather overcoming,” replied Miss Drake, “ and yet when one is only in London for a few days, it is much better to drive to a morning Assembly of this sort where one is sure to find all the world, than to be at the trouble of calling upon every

body separately.—Besides in that way there is little or no chance of seeing any one.”

When these remarks were made, the two Ladies had just seated themselves in their somewhat antiquated Post Chaise, which was driven by a Job Coachman hired for the day, and dressed in a greasy threadbare Great Coat. As they proceeded at a steady pace, Mrs. Sutton suddenly exclaimed,

“That is Lady Fauconberg’s Carriage. How very provoking that we should have missed the People in all London we were most anxious to meet!”

There was no Check-String, so she let down the window and called loudly to the Coachman to stop; but he either did not or would not hear the appeal, till after the smart Equipage which had attracted Mrs. Sutton’s attention, had driven rapidly off in an opposite direction.

“It was the Fauconberg Party sure enough,” observed Miss Drake, who fully shared her Sister’s vexation in having been unable to arrest them; “and if I am not very much mistaken, the Young Man who handed Adelaide into the Carriage with such

assiduous devotion, was no other Person than our old Friend Colonel Henry Algernon."

"Impossible," said Mrs. Sutton. "After the quarrel we all but witnessed between Adelaide and her former Lover, nothing can ever bring them together again."

She stretched her head out of the window as she spoke, with a hope of catching a glympse of the Figure of the Gentleman who had just parted from her Friends,—but he was gone.

"My eyes are not very apt to deceive me," remarked Miss Drake rather drily, "And I believe you will find that they have not done so in this instance."

"Well," replied Mrs. Sutton, "I have long ceased to wonder at any thing, yet undoubtedly this *is* very wonderful."

"It appears evident to me," continued her Sister, thoughtfully, "that some unusual business is in agitation just at present in the Fauconberg Family. We called in Berkeley-Square late in the day yesterday and were told that nobody was at home; we repeated our visit at an early hour this morning, and received

the same answer. Upon neither of these occasions do I imagine that we heard the truth; and I am convinced it must have been some very important reason that could tempt Lady Fauconberg twice to deny herself to us."

When Mrs. Sutton summoned her Maid to undress her at night, she perceived by her manner that she had a piece of intelligence to communicate. After fidgetting about for several minutes, the trusty Abigail asked her Mistress if she had seen Lady and Miss Fauconberg since she had been in London?

"No, I have not," was the ready answer. "Have you heard any thing particular about them?"

"Why after you were gone out to dinner, I just stepped for half an hour into Berkeley-Square, to ask her Ladyship's Maid, (who you know Ma'am is an old Acquaintance of mine,) how she did; and I found all the Servants in the House in a great fuss and a rejoicing about their young Mistress's Wedding that is to be.—The Officer Gentleman who was to have married her when we were in the North long ago, is now come back from Abroad. He was walking with

Sir George and the Ladies this morning in Kensington Gardens. They say Miss Fauconberg always liked *him* much better than poor Mr. Shirley, and that he is now to be her Husband after all."

This confirmation of Miss Drake's suspicions left no doubt of their accuracy in the minds of either of the Sisters.

They longed to hear minutely all the details of the Story ; and they regretted that so many hours of the night must still elapse before they could possibly attempt to offer their personal congratulations to the Bride Elect, or undertake the pleasing but laborious task of travelling from one House to another to convey the first news of her intended Marriage to all their Friends.

Adelaide's mind was much relieved by the consciousness that Colonel Algernon had been informed of the deceit that had been imposed upon her Family, and that he had forgiven the mistake it had occasioned. She rejoiced too in knowing that that part of her Father's treatment of him which he must hitherto have considered harsh and ungracious, could now ap-

pear in that light no longer. In short a heavy weight was removed from her Spirits; and instead of her health having been affected or her nerves injuriously shaken by the agitating occurrences of the last two days; the former seemed any thing but worse, while the latter were visibly tranquillized.

Mrs. Sutton and Miss Drake were destined to find their next attempt to see our Heroine as ineffectual as the preceding ones. Before the hour when they considered they might with propriety present themselves at Lady Fauconberg's door, Colonel Algernon, accompanied by Lord Altamont had been announced, and the Servant had consequently received an order that nobody else was to be admitted.

The good Ladies were rather nettled by this exclusion. They did not give up their idea of disseminating the intelligence of the approaching marriage; but they were mortified at being obliged to mention it only as a Report, (founded indeed upon *unquestionable information*;) instead of being able, as they had hoped, to declare it as an Event which they were authorized by the Family to announce.

Nothing could be kinder or more flattering than Lord Altamont's manner to Adelaide when she was first introduced to him. He and Sir George were mutually pleased with each other; and Lady Fauconberg, who was in high good humour, entertained little doubt that *She* had also made a favorable impression upon his Lordship.

Towards the conclusion of his visit, he found an opportunity of telling the Baronet, "that as Henry had informed him Miss Fauconberg had lately been an Invalid, he thought change of air might prove beneficial to her; he therefore hoped he should be able to persuade Lady Fauconberg and himself to do him the favour of spending a few weeks with him at Altamont Castle." He said, "that it was a long while since he had been in the habit of receiving many Guests there, but as his Daughter-in-Law Mrs. Algernon, was kind enough to keep every thing in very good order; he believed he could contrive to make them comfortable during their séjour under his roof: and that if they would only dare the experiment, it would give him the greatest satisfaction to see them."

He added, "that there were several Places in his Neighbourhood, well worth looking at, and that the surrounding Country was very picturesque :—but that he must depute the agreeable task of showing them the distant Lions to his Grandson, since he had himself become too infirm to be equal to that sort of exertion."

Sir George assured Lord Altamont "that he was extremely gratified by the kindness of this invitation, and that nothing would afford him greater pleasure than having the honour of accepting it;—but that he much feared so large an addition to his Lordship's Family Party would prove troublesome."

"By no means," replied the Peer. "Henry will tell you that I never make French Compliments, and that if I had not really wished to see you, I should not have pretended to ask you to come and visit me.— Seriously speaking, I feel a great desire that we should be more intimately acquainted than we are at present; and at my age you will allow that I have no time to lose."

Colonel Algernon's eyes sparkled with delight at the idea of seeing Adelaide at Altamont Castle.

“What an admirable plan!” exclaimed he. “Indeed Sir George you *must* agree to my Grandfather’s proposal.”

Then turning to Miss Fauconberg he added, “Will not *You* kindly aid me to plead in its favour?”

“I believe,” replied she, “that it will be unnecessary to do so. Yet I must confess that as far as *I* am concerned, there could be no invitation I should half so much like to accept.”

“I have little doubt,” observed Lady Fauconberg, who had yet taken no part in the discussion, “That the remedy Lord Altamont has been so kind as to recommend, would have a happier effect upon my Daughter’s health, than any thing that has been prescribed for her by her Physicians.”

“And at any rate,” concluded Adelaide, blushing deeply as she spoke—“It would be far more agreeable.”

It was accordingly determined that when the Fauconberg Family left London, they should, (instead of returning to the North,) proceed directly to Altamont Castle; and after remaining there a short time, make a little Tour along the Southern Coast.

Lord Altamont staid in Town about a fortnight longer, and during that period he was a very frequent Visitor in Berkeley Square, where it may easily be imagined that his Grandson contrived to spend the greater part of all his mornings and evenings.

The moment Henry's prospects began to assume a settled form, he resolved to go upon Half Pay, and he immediately set on foot the necessary arrangements to carry that intention speedily into effect.

Little remained to be concluded between him and Sir George. They decided that if Adelaide's health continued to improve, the Union which adverse causes had so cruelly conspired to obstruct, should take place late in the Autumn. And as many recollections might naturally render it unpleasant to the Bride to have the Ceremony performed at Fauconberg, it was proposed that the Marriage should be celebrated in London.

It was there too, that in conformity with their original plan, Colonel and Mrs. Henry Algernon were to fix their nominal Abode; and for more than a month Lady Fauconberg's active spirit found con-

stant occupation in the delightful tasks of House hunting and various other matrimonial preparations.

Colonel Algernon felt much anxiety to ascertain what was become of Woodgate. He did not apprehend that he could again have it in his power personally to injure himself; but it struck him as far from impossible that if he was driven to extreme distress, he might be tempted to make an appeal to Lord Altamont, and thus discover to him the secret which had hitherto been so carefully kept from him.

All his endeavours to trace out the wretched Man proved ineffectual, and at length he entirely gave up the attempt.

About a week before Henry left Town, as he was returning home in the dusk of the evening, he was accosted by a miserable looking Beggar, who appeared to be in the last stage of some mortal illness. He was crawling along at a slow pace, and he seemed to have scarcely strength enough left to drag one foot after the other.

“For God sake, Sir,” said he in a feeble, hollow tone, “take pity upon a poor Object who has not

many days to live.—Whatever I may formerly have been, I am no Impostor *now*; and it will be a *real* charity to bestow upon me the smallest trifle.”

Colonel Algernon was startled by the sound of the Man's voice; and upon examining his features more attentively, he had little difficulty,—altered as they were, in recognising them.

“I think you do not know me, Woodgate,” he replied.

The unhappy Wretch shrunk back in an agony of horror and dismay, and would have fallen upon the pavement if Henry had not supported him.

“I know you now Sir,” he exclaimed, “And my having applied to *You* to relieve me, is a proper judgement upon me for my wickedness. Oh Colonel Henry, I do not deserve to receive any mercy at your hands,—I have injured you deeply. I dare not ask for your forgiveness,—yet spare me, spare me; I have been severely punished here already, and I am dying!”

Henry was much affected.

“We will not talk of injuries now,” he said. “You

seem to require immediate medical aid, and I will lose no time in procuring it for you."

"It is too late," replied Woodgate, "Nothing can now restore me, and I do not even wish my miserable life prolonged; much as I have reason to dread the approach of death.—But your kindness Sir, is a more bitter reproach to me than all I have suffered. It plants daggers in my hard heart. Had you reviled me as I expected you would have done, I could have borne *that* much better."

As the wretched Sufferer seemed unwilling, perhaps ashamed to mention where he lived,—if indeed he had any settled Abode; Colonel Algernon asked him if he should object to being conveyed to an Hospital?"

"I should formerly," answered he, "have considered it a degradation which nothing could have induced me to submit to; but my pride has been so humbled, that I should be very thankful to go to such a place now if I could only obtain admittance."

Henry proceeded directly to make an application to the proper Authorities, and his measures were

taken with so much activity that he possessed himself of an Order which enabled him to have Woodgate removed that very night to the Hospital he had suggested. He spoke to him very kindly before he left him, and promised to come and see how he was the next day.

He was as good as his word; and when he enquired of the Surgeon about the state of his Patient? the Medical Man shook his head, and observed ‘that the case was hopeless;—that he appeared to be in the last stage of a decline, and that so much delirium had come on during the night—that his little remaining strength seemed nearly exhausted, and a few hours would probably terminate his existence.’

“I conclude,” added he, “that I am speaking to Colonel Algernon. The Nurse tells me that he has expressed the greatest anxiety and impatience to see You, and that he was much afraid he should die before you arrived. She suspects that he has something upon his mind, some crime which he wishes to confess to *You*. He has raved much about a Murdered Lady, he seems to be possessed with an idea that he

is haunted by her Spirit, and this fancy keeps him in a state of constant terror. But his wanderings are altogether so wild and incoherent that it is impossible to comprehend what they may refer to."

Henry requested to be conducted immediately to the Ward where Woodgate had been placed. The miserable Sufferer received him with a look of nervous eagerness,—thanked him for his goodness in coming to visit him,—and begged to be allowed to have some conversation with him in private. This petition was of course readily complied with, and Woodgate making an exertion to raise himself in his bed, began a detail of all his crimes and his feelings from the period of his first interference in the affairs of the unfortunate Donna Basilia de Lerma.

Henry endeavoured to stop him, he saw the fearful hold that subject had taken upon his mind, he wished to spare him a recital which could only awaken more bitter agonies of remorse,—and he thought that the effort of talking for any length of time, would alone be extremely bad for him. He therefore told him that he was perfectly acquainted with every circum-

stance of his conduct in Spain, and that he had also heard from Sir George Fauconberg of his compact with Mr. Shirley, and of all the consequences that had resulted from it.

“Then you have seen Sir George?” exclaimed Woodgate.

“I have, and I think it will be a comfort to you to know that the past is forgiven and forgotten, and that we are now better Friends than ever we were.”

“That is at least one Sin taken off my conscience,” said Woodgate, joyfully. “And I am deeply obliged to you Sir for having told me that all is again just as it should be between You and Miss Fauconberg.—Poor Young Lady! I can never forget how beautiful yet how death-like she looked that morning when she was to have been married to Mr. Shirley; or how petrified with horror I was, after I had told her *You* were innocent of the murder and that you were still alive, when I saw her fall senseless upon the floor, and believed that my news had really killed her.”

This was a part of the Story Henry had not before heard, it was consequently natural enough that he

did not attempt to check Woodgate's desire to recount minutely the particulars of his memorable interview with Adelaide. The poor Wretch had such a feverish inclination to talk, that although it fatigued him to do so, he had no power to stop himself.

The remaining part of his own Adventures may be told in a few words. The money Miss Fauconberg had given him supported him for a short time. He found it necessary to conceal himself from the effects of Mr. Shirley's resentment, and having accidentally stumbled upon one of his former Friends and Companions, he became leagued with a Gang of desperate Characters who subsisted by Gaming and Villany of every description. The detection of one of the Party in an offence in which all the others were implicated, —at length obliged them to dissolve their Union and separate in different directions;—and the want and misery which followed this dispersion, had reduced Woodgate to his present situation.—He appeared truly penitent for his crimes, but was so impressed with their magnitude that he had entirely given himself up to despair, and did not dare to think of seeking Religious comfort or support.

Colonel Algernon persuaded him to see a Clergyman, and found afterwards that he had expressed great satisfaction at having done so;—But when he went to the Hospital the following day to learn how the unhappy Man had passed the night,—he was informed that he had expired a few hours after he had left him.

Henry was a good deal shocked by his deplorable fate,—yet upon Horace's account he could not help feeling that his death was a sort of relief. His recovery would not under any circumstances have been desirable, since if he could have been restored to health, it was but too likely that he would have relapsed into his former evil courses;—the only thing to be regretted was that he had not been spared a little longer to prepare himself for another world.

Henry had not much time to indulge these melancholy reflections, as he had duties of a more agreeable nature to attend to. He had been summoned by his Grandfather to Altamont Castle, where he wished him to arrive a few days before his other Guests; and it will easily be believed that he had no inclination to put off obeying that summons.

Mrs. Algernon looked forward with any thing but satisfaction to the approach of the Fauconberg Family. She could not help feeling a sort of jealousy at the idea of Henry's Marriage. She contrasted it in her mind with that of her own Son.—She knew that all the world would say that her Nephew had made a better and a wiser choice than his Cousin. Nobody liked Julia,—she was a penniless Girl who had brought disgrace and misfortune as her Dower.—Adelaide she was aware, was much beloved by all her Acquaintance, she had the character of being a very charming Person, and she was a great Heiress.

Mrs. Algernon was prepared to hate the future Bride, and to find fault with every thing she might say or do;—but when she saw her, she was obliged to confess to herself that it would be almost impossible to act up to this uncharitable resolution.

Of Lady Fauconberg too, she soon began to form a very favorable opinion,—and so rapid was the transition in her sentiments respecting her that before her Ladyship had been eight and forty hours an Inmate of Altamont Castle, she declared ‘ she thought

her the most sensible as well as the most agreeable Woman she had ever met with.'

The truth was, Lady Fauconberg had spared no pains to conciliate Mrs. Algernon, and her fascinating powers had not been exerted in vain. She had perceived at once the nature of her feelings towards her Daughter, and had also had discernment enough to discover the weak points of her character.—She returned her somewhat frigid reception with the most studied civility, affected to treat her with the greatest deference and attention, and as soon as she found herself alone with her, enquired with much apparent interest if she had heard lately from her Daughter-in-Law?

“ You are not perhaps aware,” said she, “ that I have known Julia from her birth, and have been accustomed to consider her almost as a Child of my own. Poor Thing she was giddy enough to be sure, and sometimes a little wayward; her high spirits ran away with her,—but after all, at her age that was very excusable, and I have no doubt she is grown much steadier now. She was always so great

a favorite of Mine, that I thought other people, (who did not really understand her as well as I did,) were much too severe upon her. Her very superiority was the means of making her many Enemies; had she been less clever, less brilliant in society,—she would have been more generally liked. Those who have not met her, can have no idea how entertaining she is. I am sure whenever you become acquainted with her you will agree with me in thinking her quite delightful.”

Mrs. Algernon was charmed to hear her Daughter-in-Law praised, and to be able to talk of her from morning till night with a Person who seemed so fond of her, and who was able to tell her every thing about her.

In the course of these conversations, Lady Fauconberg adroitly contrived to insinuate that the circumstance of Henry Algernon’s marrying an Heiress, would be extremely advantageous to his relations, since *He* would now be independently provided for, and would require no future pecuniary assistance from them.

This hint produced the desired effect upon Mrs. Algernon. It placed her Nephew's approaching Union with Adelaide in a very different point of view from that in which she had originally considered it. She began to suspect that instead of being prejudicial to her Son, no Event could upon his account be more desirable ;—and she immediately discovered that Miss Fauconberg possessed every amiable quality under the Sun, and that Henry had been both fortunate and judicious in selecting so admirable a Wife. She found much amusement in interesting herself in all the little details and arrangements which her new Friend was liberal in communicating to her, and she became as unwilling to think of the departure of the agreeable Guests, as she had formerly been to prepare for their arrival.

Lord Altamont had derived sincere pleasure from their society. There was a charm in Adelaide's engaging manner which had delighted him from the first moment he saw her ; and when he had afterwards an opportunity of studying her amiable and interesting character, his admiration of " his future

Grand-Daughter," (as he always called her,) was warm enough even to satisfy Henry.

Her health and strength improved rapidly.—Lord Altamont declared that it was the West of England Air which had agreed with her, and had done her so much good; he would not hear of her leaving it till she had grown quite stout,—and a visit which had been originally projected to last ten days, was thus prolonged to six weeks. When the day of her departure at length arrived, the kind old Peer would not allow her to wish him good bye until Henry had promised to bring her to see him again before Christmas.

CHAP. XXXVII.

“ Why then a final Note prolong,

“ Or lengthen out a closing Song.

“ To every lovely Lady bright,

“ What can I wish but faithful Knight ?

“ To every faithful Lover too

“ What can I wish but Lady true !”

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

It was in the very beginning of October that the Morning Post announced to the world the Marriage of Colonel Henry Algernon and Miss Fauconberg ; and declared that “ after the Ceremony the Bride and Bridegroom had set off in a Chaise and four for a Villa near London, from whence it was understood they were very shortly to proceed to Sir George Fauconberg’s Seat in the North.”

In the course of time, “ the rejoicings with which *the happy Pair* were received upon their arrival at Fauconberg Manor,” were also duly described ; and

as our old Friends Mrs. Sutton and Miss Drake were known to be then staying in that Neighbourhood, the style in which the detail of these Festivities was given, led many people to suspect that it was the last mentioned Lady who had furnished the Editor of the Newspaper with the matchless Paragraph.

Sir William Shirley and Emily were re-established at Greyfield when Sir George and Lady Fauconberg came back into that part of the Country. Mr. and Mrs. Vernon and their Daughters, who had accompanied them on their first return, were gone home,—but Arthur still remained with them.

Lady Fauconberg imagined they would dread seeing her, and she experienced a similar sort of feeling herself; but after one interview was over, Sir William seemed to find pleasure in her society as well as in that of her Husband,—and the two Families met frequently. The poor Baronet always enquired kindly about Adelaide, yet it was evident that he looked forward with pain to the moment of her expected arrival at her Father's. As soon as her Friend Emily learnt that she was actually come there, she drove

over to offer her her congratulations in person ; they were both much affected when they first saw each other, but the meeting was of course more particularly distressing to Emily. She soon got the better of her feelings however, expressed the pleasure it gave her to witness Adelaide's happiness, and finally talked of, (what was almost equally interesting to the Bride,) her own future prospects.

Miss Shirley had been desired by her Father to invite the whole Party at Fauconberg to dine at Greyfield, but Adelaide considerably declined this plan,——

“ Sir William,” said she, “ will I am sure allow me to go and call upon him. Henry is very anxious too to make acquaintance with Captain Vernon. We will spend a long morning with you any day you like to name ; but indeed you ought not to think of Wedding Dinners until it is time to give them upon your own account.”

Emily pressed the subject no further, on the contrary she seemed much relieved by this arrangement. The period of the Visit was fixed. Sir William

Shirley received Colonel and Mrs. Henry Algernon without betraying any visible emotion, but Adelaide thought that his manner appeared unnatural and restrained.

He never afterwards attempted to avoid meeting her, yet it was easy to perceive that he did not feel comfortable when she was present, and that the sight of her always recalled melancholy recollections to his mind.

Mr. and Mrs. Vernon made another journey to Greyfield in the Spring that they might be present at the Union of their Son and Emily Shirley. The intelligence of that Event was the only circumstance that had cast a beam of joy over Julia's dejected spirit since the death of her Brother. But even upon that subject she was destined to receive a severe mortification, for when she communicated the good news to Horace with an air of triumphant pleasure,—he checked her at once by declaring ‘that her Sister's Marriage might perhaps give *Her* delight but that it was far from affording a cause of satisfaction to *Him*.’

The truth was, Julia had told her Husband that

Emily had had a *Passion Malheureuse* for her Cousin, and that her Father had expressed his decided disapprobation of such a connection. He knew that nothing could induce her to act in opposition to Sir William's wishes, and he had consequently taught himself to indulge a selfish hope that she would remain all her life unmarried,—and that the inheritance of Greyfield, (which was an entailed Estate,) would eventually devolve upon Julia.—Impressed as he was with this idea, it was not surprising that he replied so ungraciously to his Wife's announcement of its fallacy.

For some time Horace's compassion for Julia's distress had prompted him to treat her with the greatest kindness and attention. He endeavoured by every means in his power to soothe her mind and to amuse her; but when he found that nothing could divert her thoughts, or restore her former gaiety, he began to discover that she was but a dull and melancholy Companion, and to grow weary of her Society. He fancied that she indulged her regrets and gave way to her grief far more than was necessary, and as

he felt bored at home, he by degrees got into the constant habit of seeking entertainment elsewhere. He found many old Friends who were still ready to receive him,—the force of habit drew him easily back into his old practices ; and Julia perceived with bitter anguish that if he did not actually dislike her, he had learnt to regard her with the most perfect indifference.

She long bore his neglect in silence, but having one day lost her temper under extraordinary provocation, she reproached him keenly for all his unkindness and cruelty.

Horace's conscience told him that he deserved this reproof, but he had little inclination to bear it. He flew into a violent passion, ' desired his unfortunate Wife to recollect that *She* had been the cause of banishing him from his Country and bringing him into all his difficulties.' Said ' that she had no right to complain of his going out and leaving her, since she bored him to death by her moping ways when they were together ; and that it was only because he found *Her* so much less agreeable than other people,

that she did not enjoy more of his company.' Finally he recommended her ' if she was not satisfied with the treatment she received from *Him*, to return to her own Family.'

Julia was too much overcome by the cruelty of these taunts to attempt to make any reply, she felt that the misery of her Lot was now complete, but from that moment she determined to submit to it without murmuring.

Emily and Arthur contrived to bring about a reconciliation between Julia and her Father, he sent her his forgiveness, and she occasionally wrote to him, but she did not wish to see him, and she was glad that Horace expressed no intention of taking her back to England. Solitary and deserted as she found herself Abroad, she could contrive while she remained there to conceal her unhappiness from her Relations and from all the world; and her own pride, added to her lingering affection for her Husband, made her anxiously desirous to do so.

They had been married about four years when Horace received an account of Lord Altamont's having

been taken so dangerously ill that his life was despaired of. He told Julia that she must prepare to set out instantly with him for Altamont Castle ; but though they travelled day and night, his Grandfather had expired before they arrived there. Henry and Adelaide, who had attended the poor old Peer during his last moments, were still with Mrs. Algernon.

“ I have no longer any thing to do here,” said Henry to his Cousin as he came out upon the steps to receive him, “ but to have the pleasure of being the first person to welcome Lord and Lady Altamont to their own House. You have of course heard at the last Stage, that our poor Grandfather has been dead more than a week.”

He had made a great effort to command himself at the beginning of this sentence, but he now became too much affected to be able to utter one word more. He handed Julia very kindly out of the Carriage, but it is impossible to describe how much shocked both he and Adelaide were when they discovered the melancholy change that had taken place in her whole character. Mrs. Algernon could scarcely be-

lieve that the pale, dis-spirited Person who was now presented to her by her Son; had once been the brilliant, lively, hair-brained Daughter-in-Law, whose wit and gaiety had been described to her in such animated colours; and she wept over her with disappointment.

Henry had little desire to prolong his stay at Altamont Castle after the arrival of his Cousin, and he and Adelaide only remained there a few days to keep up an appearance of cordiality.

With the exception of the Settlement that had been originally made upon Henry, and an inconsiderable Legacy to his Wife, devised in very gratifying terms; Lord Altamont had left the whole of his Property to Horace.—In case of his dying without Children, the Family Estates which were very valuable, were strictly entailed upon his Cousin. Horace received them unencumbered by debts of his Grandfather's contracting, but they had already become heavily burthened by his own extravagance;—and so deeply were his circumstances involved in one way and another, that he found he should only pos-

sess a nominal income, and acquire the credit of enjoying an inheritance in which he had nothing more than a life interest.

Julia heard of the large Fortune her Husband had come into, wandered about his fine Place, and looked at every thing around her, with affected pleasure but real indifference. After she had recovered the fatigue of her journey, she tried to assume an air of cheerfulness, and talked of the different Towns she had visited and the sights she had seen; but all this was evidently an effort to her, and she often seemed to be thinking of one subject while she spoke of another.—She could not help forming a painful contrast between Adelaide's happiness and her own melancholy situation. The sight of her former Companion vividly recalled the recollection of her earlier and more joyful days, and her heart secretly and fondly yearned towards her Father and Emily.

“My dear Cousin,” said she rather suddenly to Adelaide when they were out walking together, “I want you to talk to me about Greyfield, to tell me about my Father. Is he well, and in tolerably good spirits?”

Adelaide was startled by this question, but she quickly replied, “that she believed Sir William had never been in better health; and that although he did not now mix much in general Society, he had always the appearance of being cheerful and contented in his own Family Circle.”

“And Emily, dear Emily;” continued Julia, “I suppose it is not very long since you met,—I need not ask you—for I feel convinced that she is as happy in her Marriage as she deserves to be.”

“She is indeed. And you may imagine what a pleasure it is to me to be able to see her as constantly as I do when I am staying at Fauconberg.—You have” added she after a pause, “been frequently the subject of our conversations my dear Julia. Your Father, as well as your Sister and Major Vernon,—feels a warm interest in every thing that concerns you, and I hope the time is not now very distant when you will all meet again.”

“I do not know how that may be,” answered Julia, thoughtfully, “there are moments when I feel that I would give the world to see them,—and then

at others I imagine that I could not bear to do so. But let us speak no more upon that point at present. —En attendant, I am curious to hear a description of Emily's little Girl. I have often wished to know who and what she is like?"

"I think she promises to be extremely like her Mother," replied Adelaide. "She is a very beautiful, engaging Child."

"That is just as it should be," observed Julia. "And the other little Animal? I suppose it is too young to resemble any thing yet."

"You speak very disrespectfully of your Nephew," said Mrs. Henry Algernon, with a smile. "He is I assure you reckoned a *Great Personage* in his own Family, and is a remarkably fine, handsome Baby."

"Oh, I beg the young Gentleman's pardon. I have no doubt he will grow up a wonderful Creature; and he cannot do better than tread exactly in Arthur's footsteps."

Then after a pause she continued in a graver tone,—

"*You* are blessed with two Children also Adelaide; I wish you would make *me* a present of one of your Sons."

“They are such Treasures,” answered Adelaide, “that I am afraid I cannot consent to part with either of them. I shall be very proud to shew them to you. I have now left them with my Mother. Poor Lord Altamont was kind enough to wish me to bring them here, but ill as I then knew him to be, it was of course out of the question.”

The appearance of Mrs. Algernon interrupted the conversation, which Julia never afterwards attempted to renew; indeed she seemed both unwilling and afraid again to trust herself to talk upon any subject immediately connected with Sir William Shirley or her Sister.

About a month after the departure of Colonel and Mrs. Henry Algernon, Lord Altamont remarked one morning at breakfast, that he found he had affairs to settle which must take him very speedily up to London. Then addressing himself more particularly to Julia; he said ‘that as it was now the gay Season, and her deep mourning would prevent her appearing much in public,—he could not ask her to do so stupid a thing as to go with him. That he thought it would

be much better and more agreeable for her to remain in the Country with his Mother during his absence.'

Julia made no objection to this arrangement. She had not the slightest desire to enter again into the London World, but it was a deep mortification to her to discover that her Husband did not wish her to accompany him in his Journey.

He had latterly treated her with much more outward kindness and attention, and she had fondly flattered herself that the affection he had once professed for her, was beginning to revive; but his present conduct entirely undeceived her, and destroyed the pleasing illusion.

She learnt by degrees that it would probably be her fate to spend the greatest portion of her future time tête-à-tête with her Mother-in-Law at Altamont Castle. Horace was very seldom there, he was not fond of the Place, and whenever he went away he contrived to find some excuse for leaving his Wife at home. In short he only favoured her with his society for a few weeks during the Shooting Season, when he brought down a Party of Gentlemen to join him in enjoying the Sport.

Lady Altamont's delicate health formed the plea for her seclusion, but it was generally suspected that her mind had been so completely unsettled by her misfortunes, and that she had become so flighty and odd, that it was impossible to allow her to appear in society.—And in truth such was the secret impression which induced Horace to immure her within the precincts of his own remote Domain. He was bored with her himself, he never wished to find himself in her company:—But had he thought her capable of deriving enjoyment from any sort of gaiety, he would have been very glad to know that she went out, and that she pleased herself in her own way.

Emily's active kindness afforded her Sister an early opportunity of renewing her intercourse with her Family, but she declined for many years to profit by this advantage; and except one painful interview with her Father, she saw very little of any of them till after the death of her Husband.

The account Mrs. Arthur Vernon had heard of Julia, after her Friend Adelaide returned from Altamont Castle, made her feel so uncomfortable about

her, that she determined to attempt to see her as speedily as possible.

As soon as she learnt that Lord Altamont was in London, she made up her mind to seek instead of to avoid meeting him; and having accidentally discovered that he was engaged to dine with his Cousin, she told Arthur that it was her intention to go and spend the evening with Adelaide who had a small Party at home, and no engagement afterwards; and she begged him to join her there when he came away from a Military Dinner to which he had been invited.

Adelaide, who was unconscious of Emily's plan, had asked Horace much about Lady Altamont.

"I enquire the more particularly," said she, "because Mrs. Arthur Vernon, who was with me yesterday, is so very anxious to hear every thing I can tell her of her Sister."

"Is Sir William Shirley now in Town?" demanded Lord Altamont.

"No," replied Adelaide. "He will come up for a short time I believe, next month."

“I would call upon Mrs. Vernon,” observed Horace, thoughtfully, “if I imagined that it would not be disagreeable to her to see me.”

“On the contrary, I will venture to assure you,” answered Mrs. Algernon, “that you would be a welcome Guest.—That your visit would afford a great relief to her mind.”

Adelaide’s look of surprise, almost of dismay, when Mrs. Arthur Vernon was announced,—convinced Horace that her appearance at that moment was no preconcerted scheme of hers. He was much startled himself; and though Emily evidently felt extremely nervous at seeing him, she held out her hand to him in so cordial a manner, that nobody present would have suspected it was the first time they had met since his return to England.

Lord Altamont allowed his Sister-in-Law a few minutes to regain her composure, and then drew a chair close to hers.

“I had but just been informed,” he began, “of your arrival in Town; and our Hostess will tell you that I had already consulted her upon the propriety

of my presenting myself at your door. Your kind reception of me here, encourages me to hope that I should not be turned away from it."

Emily replied, "That She and Major Vernon would be very glad to receive him whenever he liked to come. I wish to forget the past;" she added, "And we must all now only recollect how nearly we are related to one another."

The conversation naturally turned upon Julia.

"I fear," observed Mrs. Vernon, "that she is very far from well."

"I do not think," returned Lord Altamont, "that her *health* is greatly affected, her malady is I apprehend much more upon her *mind*. I have never hinted this in words to any person but yourself, yet it is perceptible enough to those who happen to be with her.—You are probably aware that she had a dreadful brain fever soon after her Marriage. The strength of her constitution enabled her to recover the bodily attack, but her intellect was so severely shaken, that it has not since, nor ever will regain its former clearness."

“I had suspected something of this,” said Emily, who appeared much distressed by what she had just heard.

“But do you imagine the evil is quite beyond all remedy?”

“I am afraid it is,” answered Horace. “In such a case an appeal to medical skill is of course out of the question. I have ineffectually tried every possible change of place and scene. And as to bringing her here, and attempting to induce her to go into public, it strikes me that such a plan would be far from proving either desirable or judicious.”

Mrs. Arthur Vernon assented to the truth of this reasoning.

“I should very much like to see poor Julia,” added she. “Major Vernon is going down to Plymouth next week to meet his Brother, and if you thought that a visit from me would be a comfort to my Sister, I know that he would then very readily contrive to take me to Altamont Castle, and bring me back again to Town after he had accomplished the purpose of his own Journey.”

“Your proposal is indeed most kindly devised,” replied Lord Altamont. “And if any thing in the world can yet be of service to Julia, I am sure it will be a visit from *You*. Whenever you have made your arrangements I will write to her upon the subject, it will perhaps be better that she should have but a short notice of your approach. Believe me I shall feel sincere pleasure in knowing that you are *my* guest, and I only regret that it will not be in my power to be at home to receive Major Vernon myself.”

When Arthur returned from his Dinner Party, he was not a little astonished to learn how Emily's evening had been employed. He rejoiced to find that she had so ably accomplished what he was aware had long been the wish of her heart, and he instantly agreed to facilitate her putting the project she had suggested into speedy execution.

It would be impossible to describe the feelings of the two Sisters when they met again under circumstances so widely different from those in which they had been placed when they last parted.—For a brief

space Emily's presence seemed to have restored Julia to her former self, her sorrows appeared to be forgotten, and she talked and laughed with something like her original gaiety. But when Mrs. Vernon in the kindest and most delicate manner, ventured to express a hope of seeing her at some future period at Greyfield; her air and tone became suddenly changed.

"No, dearest Emily," exclaimed she, in a hurried melancholy voice, "I can never go to Greyfield,—I could not bear it—it would kill me! When Horace comes back I shall ask him to take me to London for a little while,—perhaps a week—that I may endeavour to see my Father once more; and my Husband is so kind that I am sure he will not refuse me such a request.—You must not imagine I am ungracious, or suppose that I undervalue the happiness of seeing you, because I cannot make up my mind to visit you under my Father's roof. I shall have no pleasure so great as the hope of occasionally meeting *You* and Arthur, and one or two other People, elsewhere.—As for what is called society, I have given it up; I am not now fit for it. It would bore me to make new

Friends, and I should not dare to look my old ones in the face."

"I suppose," said Emily, endeavouring to give a turn to her ideas, "that Lord Altamont intends to live principally here?"

"I do not yet know," replied Julia hastily, "Yes, I dare say we shall. At any rate, if I do not change my present opinion, (which it is probable enough that I may do,) *I* shall prefer remaining the greatest part of the year at this place, to removing to any other. I have every thing I can want or wish for here. Mrs. Algernon takes all sort of trouble off my hands ; and *I* am only called upon to act the part of Miladi la Maîtresse in my old Chateau, without being plagued with any of the cares of inspecting or directing the ménage."

Emily found that her Sister was determined to give her the impression that Lord Altamont was an excellent Husband, and that she was perfectly satisfied and contented with the lot she had chosen for herself. Neither she or Arthur were entirely deceived by her representations, but they thought it would be their kindest plan to lead her to imagine that they were so.

They left Altamont Castle with the comfortable idea that their visit had gratified her, and soothed her mind ;—And it was also a relief to them to have ascertained that they had done all that was in *their* power towards alleviating those sorrows which were far too deeply rooted ever to be forgotten.

Sir William Shirley did not live a great many years after the death of his Son. The shock of that Event had imperceptibly undermined his health, and contributed to shorten his days. Deeply as he had suffered from the misconduct and misfortunes of his other Children, he had the consolation of retaining the society of Emily. Her attentions, and Arthur's soothed him during his last moments, and he had the comfort of leaving them surrounded by every blessing the world could afford.

Lord Altamont's wild extravagance kept him in continual distress and embarrassment. The perplexing confusion of his affairs; the mortifications and disappointments to which he was frequently subjected; and above all, his own bitter and self-reproaching reflections,—led him to plunge even deeper than he

had hitherto done into Gaming and every other species of dissipation. And his selfish and unprincipled Career of vice and folly, was at length prematurely terminated by a desperate and violent death.

Julia, who in spite of his neglect, still loved him with a childish and extravagant affection; was inconsolable at his loss. This new grief considerably aggravated her mental infirmity. She determined to shut herself up in a Cottage close to Altamont Castle; and it was a long time before either her Sister or Adelaide could persuade her to break through her resolution, and establish herself in an Abode more suitable to her rank and situation.

Of Colonel and Mrs. Henry Algernon it is merely necessary to say, that their long and severe trials were succeeded by a very extended continuance of greater prosperity and happiness than falls to the share of most people.

Adelaide entirely regained her health and beauty. Her Sons were particularly promising youths, and her Daughters grew up as lovely and as amiable as herself. Worldly advantages seemed to be showered

down upon her and upon Henry in every shape ; since in addition to what they already possessed, the Title and Estates of Altamont devolved upon the latter at his Cousin's decease.—And as it was one of Sir George Fauconberg's liberal maxims not to approve of too great an accumulation of riches ; the Settlement of his own Property was so arranged by his Will,—that Fauconberg Manor with all its broad Lands, was to descend to the Second Son of Lord and Lady Altamont, whenever his elder Brother became possessed by inheritance of his Father's Peerage and his Paternal Estates annexed to it.

THE END.

RICHARD NICHOLS, TYPOGRAPHER, WAKEFIELD.



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